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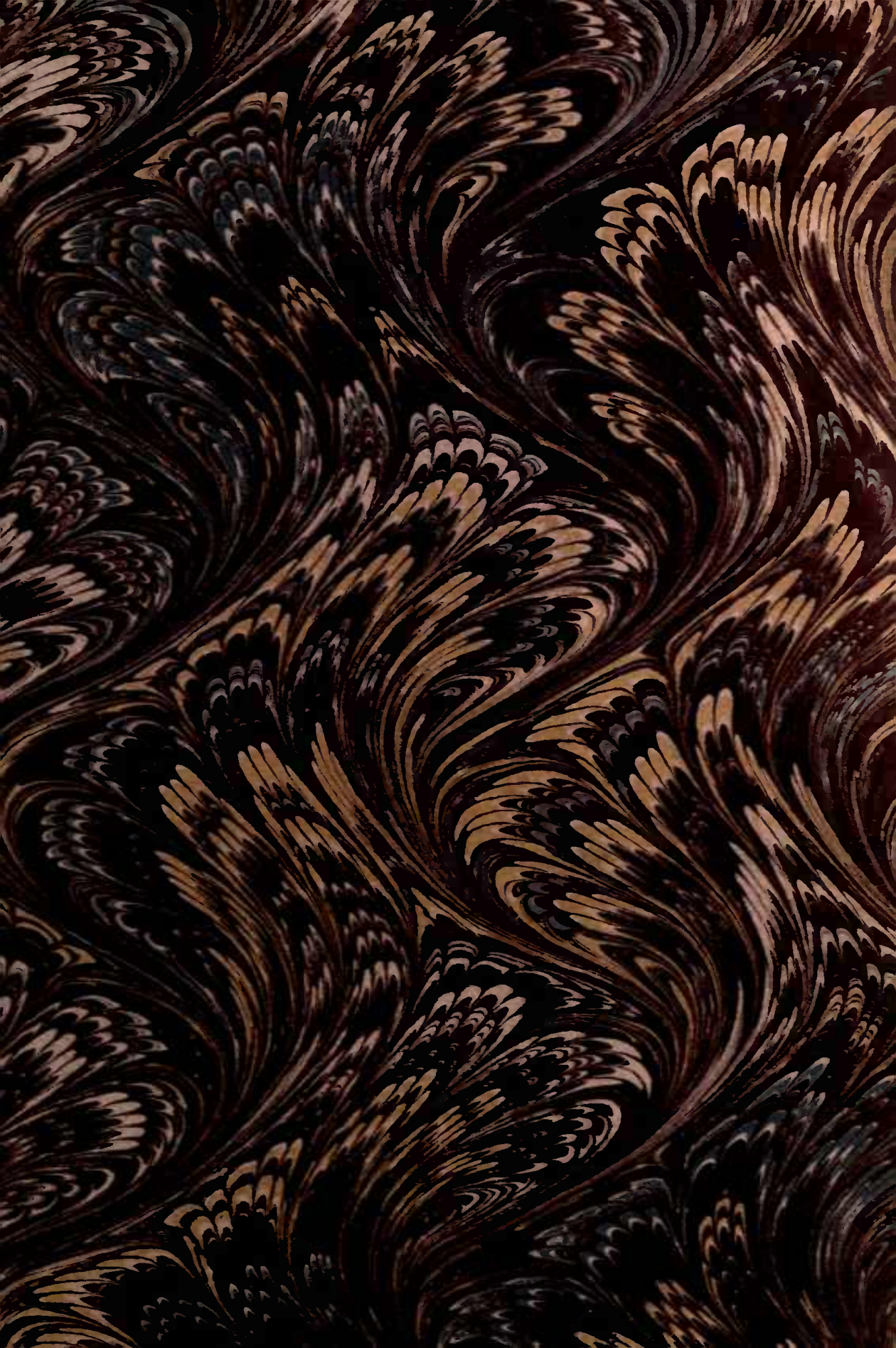

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CHICAGO

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VICTOR COUSIN.

CHAPTER I.

HIS BIOGRAPHY.

SOME men make much noise during their lives, and are unknown to posterity. M. Victor Cousin is not such a man. He immortalized his name by great services and brilliant works; but those who did not live in his time cannot imagine what a noise he made in the world while here. He liked this notoriety, and courted it. I remember that on the approach of the Revolution of 1848, when the noise of political and social discussions rather drowned the noise he made with his philosophical and religious discussions, he trembled for fear of being forgotten. "It is necessary to show one's self," said he to me. "I have a feeling that we need to show ourselves." He said "we need" as the king says "we will." When he was Minister of Public Instruction, — a post he

held for but eight months, — he filled "The Moniteur" and the official newspapers with his orders, his circulars, his public speeches, his small talk, and his plans. M. Damiron, called by Cousin himself the wisest of the wise, gently chid him: "You show yourself too much; you will weary the public." But Cousin replied, "We must show ourselves."

And this was the one of all his passions that was most completely satisfied. He came at a time when there was a great dearth of literary talent. Public instruction had stopped during the years of terror; the few self-educated men were seized by the army or by the administration. Every one had been enlisted in one way or another. Hardly a man was left at liberty. Michelet tells how, at the time of his graduation, — four or five years after Cousin, — the publishers snatched at the pettiest scholar in the hope of finding material for a man of letters. That was a fine time to show one's self; one was not hidden by a crowd. The same held true of the teaching profession. Under the Empire, about the only college professors mentioned are Villemain, Joseph Victor Le Clerc, and Naudet; but how much they are mentioned! There were no public lectures. A private club founded or revived "The Lyceum," and this at once became very popular.

People felt a general need of speech after a long silence, — I mean of speaking French ; for in that time of clubs a dialect was spoken which had nothing in common with that of our great literary epochs. In the early years of the Empire, to speak of literature in correct language was enough to insure success. If correct language was coupled with a little wit, enthusiasm was aroused. The Parisian Literary Faculty began their lectures in 1809, in the buildings of the Collège du Plessis. As soon as Villemain had a public lectureship he was popular. La Romiguière's lectures on psychology were as renowned among the women as Bourdaloue's sermons had been. They attended Lacretelle's course in crowds, till he was compelled to forbid their coming. M. Royer-Collard never had more than a limited public. He spoke well, with a certain austerity that won assent but repelled infatuation. When I say he spoke well, I am in error; what should be said is, that he read well. Some years later, when people saw and heard Cousin, the effect was prodigious. He looked like an apparition. Imagine a slender youth of twenty-three, with an expressive face and blazing eyes, seeming during the first moments like a dying man, gradually warming to his subject, letting the audience see his mind at work, seeking for

words, finding admirable ones, — clear enough to give people some inkling of what they were applauding, obscure enough to give play to the imagination, — gifted with a fine voice, an actor to his finger-tips, a thinker undoubtedly and still more of an artist, a preacher rather than a professor, combining the airs of the tribune with those of the apostle. From the first day he had enthusiasts, and even fanatical adorers.

I say enthusiasts, be it observed; I do not say disciples, — his disciples were not very numerous nor very faithful, — neither do I say friends, for he had but few. To offset this he had crowds of admirers, and before long as many enemies. That Revolution which had imperilled all heads and challenged all beliefs, had created in the new generation enormous intellectual needs. Cousin was the first professor of philosophy with the courage to speak of religion and politics. To begin with, he had against him the then living ideologists and the disciples of La Romiguière, both claiming to represent the French philosophy. Cousin asked them if there was also a French geometry. Speedily bigots took alarm, as he found out to his cost when once they had obtained a decided advantage. The conservatives also took alarm, — even the more liberal ones, —

and accused him of disturbing young men's "serenity." To crown all, the philosophers hastened to accuse him of timidity. In the eyes of some, he was unsettling everything; in the eyes of others, he was granting everything. The Tories reproached him with his love for the last Brutus, and the Whigs with his admiration for the Charter. M. de Bonald and M. Pierre Leroux agreed in refusing him the title of philosopher, but no one disputed his genius. This chorus of praise and blame gave him that popularity which is more intoxicating than fame, and is not always followed by fame. Cousin owed his popularity to his defects, and his fame to his solid merits.

Victor Cousin was born at Paris, Nov. 28, 1792. According to the official record of his birth, which I have in my possession, he was a jeweller's son. It is repeated in his biographies that he was a watchmaker's son, like Jean Jacques Rousseau. His father was a working jeweller, who may very probably have been employed at a watchmaker's. Damiron has often told me that the mother did washing or ironing, and Cousin himself related to me that his parents' lodgings were reached by a stairway resembling a ladder. In short, whatever their business, they were a family of poor working people. He had a brother, who never

appeared and was never spoken of in his circle. Victor Cousin may be said to have been bred in the gutter up to the age of ten.

One day early in October, 1803, at half-past four in the afternoon, the children rushed tumultuously from the Charlemagne Lyceum, pursuing with loud cries a schoolmate clad in a great-coat, which made him, in their eyes at least, very ridiculous. This schoolmate was Epagomène Viguier, whom I afterward knew as professor of Greek and director of studies at the Normal School, the mildest, most learned, and most awkward of men. He was then only the mildest and most awkward of pupils. Instead of resisting and defending himself, he wept hot tears. The more he wept, the more they worried him. While he was being hustled, pushed, and beaten, an urchin of eleven years, who had been playing in the gutter, rushed into the thick of the mob, and scattered the band of persecutors by giving the ringleaders a shower of blows. Madame Viguier was informed of this act of heroism that very evening. She learned that the young conqueror belonged to a family of working people, that by a mere chance he knew how to read and write, and that he was wont to spend the live-long day as a vagabond, in anticipation of the time when he should become an appren-

tice. She declared that she would defray the expenses of his education. He entered the Charlemagne Lyceum, and advanced with giant strides, doing two years' work in one, and carrying off all the prizes at the final competitive examination. Had it not been for that shower of blows just at the right moment, perhaps France might still be conning the amusing and witty philosophy of La Romiguière.

M. Vapereau says that Cousin, while at school, had dreamed of some day becoming a musician. I know not whence this information is derived; I leave that on M. Vapereau's conscience. The truth is that Cousin wrote, at some time or other, the libretto of an opera called, "The Three Flagons," to be set to music by Halévy. The score was never composed, and the libretto was never published. I do not think Cousin ever had any other relations with music. He had been so successful in his classes, and men were then so scarce, that he was offered a place as auditor of the State Council, — a sure road to fortune. He preferred to enter the Normal School, which was first opened in 1810, at the very time when he left college. He is said to have held the first place in the first promotion. It should be added that there was then no competitive examination properly so-called, and that pupils

were chosen and classified by the Inspectors-General as they went their rounds.

Cousin's novitiate at the Normal School lasted two years, and he did not fail to shine among the foremost. As professors of rhetoric at the Lyceum he had had M. Victor Le Clerc and M. Villemain; the latter he still had as lecturer at the Normal School, and immediately after finishing his course of study Cousin was asked to act as Villemain's substitute in the chair of Greek literature. I have it from himself that he was offered the chair of philosophy in the Communal College of Rome. "But I was not willing," he added, "to leave the streets of Paris." Behold him, then, installed at the age of twenty as professor of Greek!

There had been some thoughts of appointing him professor of philosophy, a fact which clearly indicates the status of philosophical instruction at that epoch. Not only could he, at that early age, have formed no doctrine of his own, but he did not know, even by name, the doctrines of others. He had picked up at most only a few cursory lessons. "I took my course in philosophy at nineteen," he said; that is, in his second year at the Normal School. There were no courses in philosophy at the lyceums, where they were not

introduced until required by the regulation of Sept. 19, 1809. As yet there was but one academic course in philosophy.

In the preface to his "Fragments," written in 1833, Cousin gives the following account of his call to philosophy: "I remember, and shall always remember with grateful emotion, the day in 1811 when for the first time — as a pupil in the Normal School preparing for the teaching of literature — I heard M. La Romiguière. That day decided my whole life: it took me from my early studies, which promised me peaceful successes, to plunge me into a career in which storms and disappointments have not been wanting. I am no Malebranche; but I felt when I heard M. La Romiguière what Malebranche is said to have felt when he happened to open a treatise by Descartes." It would seem that in discovering La Romiguière, Cousin at the same time discovered philosophy. And this is the exact truth. Philosophy was not taught in the lyceums; the Faculties had just been established, — or re-established, as some may prefer to say. The ideologists and the whole school of Condillac were already about forgotten; they had never had more than a limited public. Nothing was known of ancient philosophy, nor even of our French philosophers before Con-

dillac. The name and existence of Kant was not learned till some years later. M. Royer-Collard, formerly clerk of the Paris Commune, ex-member of the Council of Five Hundred, a lawyer, and in no wise a philosopher, was appointed professor of philosophy in 1809. Now, a professor of philosophy must teach philosophy; to teach it he must know it. M. Royer-Collard, being ignorant of it, walked the quays looking for an instructor. He found one in a book-stall. An odd volume of Reid's "Philosophical Essays" did for him what Descartes had done for Malebranche, and what La Romiguière was doing at this very time for Victor Cousin. France was in very great need of the establishment of chairs of philosophy; she belonged in advance to the first teacher who offered, but a teacher she must have. Cousin assures us that the Normal School was for La Romiguière in 1811, and for Royer-Collard in 1812. It is easy to guess who headed the school toward La Romiguière the first year, and toward Royer-Collard the second. It was the professor of Greek. He already had the power of making proselytes which distinguished him throughout life.

Cousin was acting professor of Greek during the year 1812, and that year he had as pupils M. Paul Dubois, since Director of the Normal

School, and M. Viguier, the same who had been the occasion of the first battle of his life. In 1813 Cousin was appointed lecturer in philosophy. His duty consisted in attending the lectures of the Faculty of Letters with the students, with whom he afterward discussed them. Cousin had in his class at the Normal School in 1813, the Abbé Bautain and Jouffroy; in 1814, Damiron. Bautain, Jouffroy, Damiron, thenceforward composed his little group of disciples. They were as much schoolfellows as pupils.

Jouffroy having ceased to believe in the authenticity of the Catholic religion, and yet wanting to believe its dogmas, was prepared to receive them at school from the mouths of philosophers, no longer imposed by tradition but demonstrated by reasoning. When they spoke to him only of the origin of ideas, he felt greatly defrauded. He was not then able to find the hidden relations that connect what are apparently the most lifeless and most abstract philosophical problems with the most living and most practical questions. He complained bitterly of teaching which seemed to make a point of avoiding the gravest problem, perhaps the only one of any importance: "M. de La Romiguière had inherited philosophy from the eighteenth century narrowed

down to one problem, and had not extended its limits. The vigorous mind of M. Royer-Collard, finding this problem, had plunged into it with might and main, and had not had time to get through with it. M. Cousin, falling into the midst of the fray, at once attacked the problem, risking that he would find its solution later on. The philosophical world was in a hole, where, for lack of air, my soul was stifling; and yet the authority of the masters and the enthusiasm of their disciples so imposed upon me, that I dared not show either my surprise or my disappointment."

Cousin, having seen at once what the question of the origin of ideas led up to, was filled with enthusiasm. That his was a soul which only sought a pretext for its enthusiasm, is proved by the fact that he was enthusiastic for La Romiguière, whose lectures were no more than witty and attractive. After two years of teaching at the Normal School he was already marked out for the career of public instruction. Royer-Collard chose him as his substitute in 1815 (Nov. 13, 1815).

1815! To this date must be assigned the first political episode in Victor Cousin's life: he enlisted in the royal volunteers. This was his only campaign; it was neither brilliant, nor bloody, nor even fatiguing; he went as far as

Vincennes, and came back to Paris the next day. This campaign of Vincennes made less noise than M. Guizot's trip to Ghent; and it must be admitted that it was of less importance. I think that when the country is threatened a man's proper place is with her defenders, whatever their political opinions; but I also remember that Cousin was only twenty-two years of age; that Napoleon's despotism, hard enough to endure in France, had become visibly odious and intolerable to the rest of Europe; and finally, that in politics more than in anything else we must pardon those whose intentions are upright. Cousin's whole life, in spite of appearances to the contrary, was consistent with this first step.

He entered upon his public professorship after a very insufficient preparation, since it had hardly lasted two years. I must say at once that, besides La Romiguière and Royer-Collard, he had as a master a man who, though he did not make it his business to teach philosophy, had not his equal in France for the gift of observing what passes within, and for delicacy and profundity of psychological judgment; this was Maine de Biran, the only one of Cousin's masters whom I have not personally known. Cousin learned from La Romiguière to study sensation, from Royer-

Collard to study mind, and from Maine de Biran to study will.

The lectures of the first year (1815–1816) turned almost exclusively on Scotch philosophy. M. Cousin was sustained in his instruction by the three teachers above mentioned; but his mind travelled faster than theirs. He rapidly summed up their work, completed it, and passed on. Germany attracted him as a new and unknown land of which wonders were related. He learned German, though he never knew it well, and began with infinite pains to decipher Kant, not in his text, but in the barbarous Latin of Born. He had not finished this decipherment when he announced lectures on Kant's philosophy. What he had not read, he guessed at. As at the end of 1816 he had left behind him Royer-Collard and Maine de Biran, so at the end of 1817 he thought that he had passed beyond the philosophy of Kant; and he desired to go and study on the spot the new German philosophy, the philosophy of Nature, which Schelling had just founded on the ruins of Kant's school. Everything attracted him toward this new master; it even seems that before having studied this new doctrine he felt drawn toward it by the current of his own ideas.

He found Germany on fire, he tells us.

Take note that he speaks only of philosophers, and of the quarrels of the schools. On the one side, the disciples of Kant were filling up the gaps in his philosophy, and defending it as best they could against its detractors. On the other side, Jacobi's school was striving to raise faith above reason, making faith depend upon enthusiasm. Schelling's strength lay in seeing that enthusiasm belongs to reason itself, and is only a purer and higher application of reason. On the occasion of this visit Cousin did not see Schelling, but met Hegel instead, at Heidelberg, without seeking him and almost by chance.

Hegel was as yet merely a distinguished disciple of Schelling. Germany was far from foreseeing that he was to be the Aristotle of another Plato. Cousin foresaw this, and said to his friends on his return to France, "I have just seen a man of genius." Hegel for his part appreciated Cousin, or perhaps felt grateful for an admiration to which, as yet, his own countrymen had not accustomed him. From this year (1817) dates a friendship which, though lukewarm at intervals, was lasting. The next year Cousin pushed on as far as Munich, where he passed a month between Jacobi and Schelling. He is a great admirer of Schelling, but we see that his heart is for

Hegel. He has traced a parallel between the disciple and the master in which, in spite of his secret predilection, he does justice to the founder of the philosophy of Nature. The master was gifted with a powerful invention, and the disciple with profound reflection. Schelling is thought in its development; his language, like his look, is full of life and brightness; he is naturally eloquent. Hegel lets fall at rare intervals his profound and somewhat enigmatical words. His strong but hampered diction, his impassive countenance, his clouded brow, seem the very image of thought turning back upon itself. "On the whole," Cousin added, "he was not especially amiable; but I liked him and he liked me."

It may readily be imagined that the whole course of 1818 was full of this philosophy of which Cousin said: "It is true; it is the true." Schelling and Hegel led him to Plotinus,— absolute unity perceived, without intermediary, by pure intelligence. It is still in the name of this doctrine that he judges, in the following years, the great schools of ethics and metaphysics which filled the eighteenth century: the school of Condillac, — which is based upon Locke, — the Scotch school, the German school of Kant and Fichte. He judges them with independence, because he

feels or fancies himself master of his subject, and makes of them allies to the philosophy of Nature, extended and completed. Relying upon a psychological analysis which gives him a foundation that he deems unassailable, he separates the truth from the error in each school, and then, for the first time, gives to his method a name, borrowed from the Alexandrians and from Leibnitz, — Eclecticism. This name has since become, in current language, the name of his system and of his school.

The year 1820 was signalized by the assassination of the Duke de Berry, followed by a violent reaction. The party in power, stung to frenzy, decided to tamper with the electoral law, with the freedom of the press, and even with individual liberty. The three courses of Guizot, Cousin, and Villemain, attracting considerable crowds, in which students predominated but towns-people were also present, were hot-beds of liberal agitation that could not fail to arouse suspicion. Here freedom was practised and taught; here people were brought to love revolutionary principles, — not those, to be sure, of 1793, but the principles of 1789, which, as having thrown down all barriers and given free play to all grudges, the party now in power affected to confound with those

of 1793. Villemain found indulgence because of certain memories of 1815, and because his course related wholly to literature. Guizot they did not at first dare to touch, since he was a well-known supporter of the government, closely connected with Royer-Collard, and formerly general secretary of the department of justice. Cousin was younger, without high family connections, and he was only a substitute. Although by his tastes and principles belonging, after all, to the conservative camp, he liked to parade his liberalism, which was real; he did not avoid religious questions; he had uttered intemperate words concerning the Revolution, — a sure way to stir and captivate the liberal youth; he was the most brilliant personification of the young University and of the Normal School. He was silenced. Two years later the increasing reaction obliged Guizot to leave his chair. This was a great political event and occasioned an extensive schism in the ranks of the former liberal Right. Guizot and Royer-Collard went over to the opposition, while De Serre joined Villèle. Of the great Sorbonne triumvirate only Villemain remained; but Villemain was warned by the blows that fell around him, weakened by isolation, and had never had much liking for martyrdom. The Normal School

was suppressed. Cousin, who, though a philosopher, was perhaps still more of a professor and an orator, found himself checked in the midst of a career in which each step had been marked by a triumph. All at once, both the Sorbonne and the Normal School had failed him; it seemed that his livelihood was gone. Teaching outside of public schools was not to be thought of, as there was no such teaching; nor could he turn to the newspapers, which were restricted, fettered, overrun with contributors. He had not the brisk manner and the light touch of the journalist. He wrote as he spoke,—slowly, with lucky hits, magnificent flights, but at the same time with a certain seriousness which revealed the professor. Moreover, journalism was not to his taste; he was exclusively devoted to general ideas. What was he to do? He accepted the position of tutor to the Duke of Montebello's son, and gave himself up with ardor to works of philosophical erudition more profitable to others than to himself, which did him honor without adding to his fame or mitigating his honorable poverty. During the eight years of silence imposed upon him, from 1820 to 1828, he published a good edition of Descartes, an edition of Proclus, and the first volumes of his translation of Plato, which he considered

then, and ever after, as his chief work. In 1824 he was asked to take his pupil to Germany. This journey served his purposes admirably, for he was eager to revisit Hegel, to live once more in that studious atmosphere, with its discussions and ardent investigations, to find himself again in the midst of that school to which, since 1818, he had not ceased to belong, with those men whom he had called in the dedication of Proclus's "Commentary on Parmenides," — "My friends and teachers, the chief philosophers of our century."

This was Cousin's third visit to Germany, and it was marked by an entirely unexpected adventure. He was arrested by the Prussian police, who accused him of preaching Carbonarism, and even suspected that he had come to Germany to organize a plot against the government. They gave him a regular trial, but the proceedings were secret, and not even the charges were shown him. He remained six months in prison, and it is likely that he owed his release to the efforts of Hegel, who espoused his cause with great zeal and friendliness. We may imagine what torments this imprisonment in a foreign land, combined with the uncertainty of his fate, must have caused to a man who had steadily kept out of political turmoils, — a man of an ardent imagination, an imperious

temper, a ceaseless craving for movement and expansion. He relates that he had to put up with hard fare; and we can easily believe that no one fared well in the dungeons of Prussia in 1824. He complained of having "contracted *varices*" there. I do not doubt that he thought all was over with him until the time when Hegel came to offer his aid. He told me several times, as he related this adventure with his most tragic air, "One thing alone preoccupied me, — the translation of Plato was not finished!" He counted life as nothing compared with this. We cannot help smiling at these exaggerated fears, and yet we must acknowledge that the mishap was a cruel one. His imprisonment lasted six months. He improved the time by studying German and by reading the works of Kant, Fichte, Jacobi, Hegel. He had a great admiration for Goethe, and had visited him at Weimar; and now, merely as a linguistic exercise, turned some of his verses into French.

When it was known in France that this professor, so young and yet so famous, the centre of so much admiration and sympathy, whose popularity had very naturally been increased by his dismissal, was persecuted in Prussia for his liberal opinions, there was an explosion of wrath against the persecuting government, and of enthusiasm for the martyr. This enthusiasm

would have been much greater if people had known of the *varices*. Upon his return to France, Cousin simply set to work again at his translation of Plato, and did not triumph overmuch in his *rôle* as a victim. He recalled it with suitable moderation when M. de Martignac restored him to his chair in 1828, no longer as the substitute but as the associate of M. Royer-Collard: "I cannot but feel deep emotion upon my reinstatement in this chair, to which I was first called in 1815 as the choice of my illustrious friend and teacher, M. Royer-Collard. My removal from this chair was one of the first deeds of a party no longer in power. To-day, upon the revival of the constitutional hopes of France [applause], I return to this place with pride and rejoicing, and in my loyal gratitude I feel the need of publicly thanking my country's king and ministry. . . . As I look about me, I shall do myself the justice to testify that, amid all the commotions of our epoch, amid the various chances of the political events in which I might have taken part, my wishes have ever been bounded by these walls. Wholly devoted to philosophy, after having had the honor to suffer a little in her cause, I come hither to consecrate to her, irrevocably and without reserve, all that remains of my strength and of my life."

This was noble language, and as adroit as it was noble. He declared his devotion to liberty before an audience all aglow with liberal passions; he came in for a share of the popularity — the immense popularity — of the new ministry; he protested his disinterestedness; he briefly recalled his dismissal; he made a discreet allusion to the Prussian dungeons. His mere presence in that chair from which he had been banished seven years before, coupled with the return of M. Guizot at the same time, filled those young hearts with joy. They had recovered their master and idol, all the greater for the persecution he had suffered. It was a fine lesson, and the enthusiasm of the audience knew no bounds. Cousin had neither Guizot's strength nor Villemain's copiousness, but his age (thirty-six years) made him nearer to young men; he was their representative, their leader, their inspirer. He was known to be poor, and had recently been a sufferer. He treated of all the great questions that powerfully interest men, — questions then more than ever the order of the day. He spoke of the continuity of philosophy, of its history, and of history in general. He remodelled the "Discourse on Universal History" from a philosopher's stand-point, basing philosophy upon psychology, elucidating the development of

mankind by describing the development of philosophic thought, assigning to religion and philosophy their separate parts in attaining a common purpose, restoring to man the direction of human affairs ascribed by Bossuet to God alone, dazzling minds full of Napoleon's epic story by the theory of great men. Such were the lectures of the first year, in which Cousin threw light upon the most diverse questions, improvised doctrines, sketched systems, more than once pushed his boldness to rashness, overheated the passions of youth, and opened wide outlooks on every side. The next year he passed with long strides over the history of the schools; and returning to Locke after having gone back as far as the Oriental schools, he gave a sound, irrefutable, and — by a climax of art — attractive refutation of eighteenth century sensationalism. It was at this point that the Revolution of 1830 stopped his teaching, and stopped it forever.

Cousin was sincere when, upon his reinstatement in his chair at the Sorbonne, he expressed his gratitude to the king and the Martignac ministry. This ministry was liberal, in the sense that it was unwilling to go back to the Old Régime and to submit to the clergy; but it was devoted to the elder branch of the Bourbons and professed the greatest respect for religion,

and even for the clergy when they restricted themselves to the sphere of their religious duties and made no pretension to political leadership. This was exactly Cousin's line of conduct. He had enlisted in 1815 in the royal volunteers. He had publicly and repeatedly eulogized the Charter; and he renewed his eulogy in 1826 in a passage of his "Fragments" which has remained famous. He praises the Charter, in this passage, not only for the liberalism that is in it, but for all that is in it. He regards it as well-nigh the acme of political wisdom. He does not find fault with it for having proclaimed a State religion; on the contrary, "It necessarily required this," — a somewhat odd saying for a philosopher. To express his position in proper names, I may say that he was a liberal of Royer-Collard's school rather than of the school of Thiers or Mignet. He said to Thiers and Mignet, "You will ruin us."

He was not one of those who were on the 27th hostile to the July Revolution, and on the 29th its declared partisans. He deplored the victory, as he had deplored the conflict. He often repeated to me, after he had heartily committed himself to the support of Louis Philippe's government, that a change of cabinet would have been enough; that the Revolution had unsettled monarchical principles with-

out any advantage to liberty. Like the Duke de Broglie, — and for the same reasons, — he was a mere spectator of the struggle. He even went into the "Globe" office to express his disapprobation. Like the Duke de Broglie, again, when the Revolution became a settled fact, while regretting it, he loyally supported the resulting régime. The public, and the new government itself, reckoned him among the victors, and gave him the rewards of a victory which he would have hindered if he could.

That M. Guizot should have been thrown into opposition in 1822 by the government's violent acts, surely shows how hard contemporaries often find it to understand one another. Men's minor impulses hide from others their general tendencies. M. Guizot was liberal, to be sure, but he was in a higher degree conservative. And I say the same of M. Cousin. The liberals were then especially interested in the war which the clergy was waging upon philosophy. The clergy would fain control philosophy, or suppress it. M. Cousin, while granting to the clergy their claim to a State religion and the advantages which the Charter connected therewith, and even allowing them a very large share in the direction of the schools, and wishing bishops to sit in the Chamber of Peers, nevertheless maintained, in opposition to

the Ultramontanes, the principles of individual liberty and the independence of philosophy. Upon these two points he would not yield, and never did yield. As he held no political office under the Restoration, it was not perceived — or was hardly noticed — that he made such concessions to the Church; his reservations in favor of freedom, on the other hand, were very clearly seen. The success of his teaching was the success of the liberal party. The enemies of that party felt this, and therefore they struck him down in 1820. The friends of the party also felt this, as they proved by their acclamations. First by his dismissal, and then by his Prussian imprisonment, he was anointed a revolutionist in spite of himself. It is said that men always end by having the opinions which they are accused of having. M. Cousin, though regarded by many as undecided and wavering in his opinions, appears to me, on the contrary, to have been very consistent in his teaching and very straightforward in his conduct. Those who assert that he was a Jacobin before he was a ministerialist, base their charge upon popular rumor. It has no other foundation, except, perchance, some of those inconsiderate words that will escape a man of lively imagination who passes his life in writing and speaking. Yes, Cousin could not rid his heart of a certain

tenderness for the last Brutus; but if Cousin had been in the Roman Senate, and Brutus had there been arraigned for the murder of Cæsar, Cousin would have condemned his favorite to death.

In June, 1830, he was only associate professor in the Literary Faculty at Paris. After July he was full professor, member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, and State Councillor Extraordinary. He was in the same year elected a member of the French Academy. Upon the organization of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, in 1832, he was appointed to be one of its first members. The same year he was called to the peerage. He was Minister of Public Instruction in M. Thiers's cabinet in 1840.

It is needless to say with what sentiments he witnessed the approach of the February Revolution. An eye-witness assures me that, dressed as a peer, he followed M. Odilon Barrot as far as the Tuileries. The costume of the peer is unlikely; that he went is certain. His object, doubtless, was to assure the king of his fidelity, and perhaps to give his support to his friends, M. Thiers, M. de Rémusat, and M. Duvergier de Hauranne, who at one time thought it possible to form a ministry with the aid of Odilon Barrot. While returning, he fell in with a band

of insurgents. They were making a barricade, and ordered him to add at least one stone. "I cannot do it," said he. "How could I? The king has just appointed me his minister." These words, and perhaps the peer's robe, — if there was one, — raised a laugh. Thus ended his Odyssey, which nevertheless required more courage than his campaign as a royal volunteer in 1815. Then, he had friends and opinions in both camps. In 1848 he sacrificed everything. In the end we always man the brakes of revolution, or rather in the end we always recover from the shock; but it requires more or less time and trouble. The brakes were quickly applied in 1830. The Revolution of 1848 was harder to manage. It carried away not a dynasty, but monarchy itself, and threatened the whole social system (Beware of the next!). The Royal Council being dissolved, Cousin retained no hold on the University except his professorship in the Literary Faculty. This he resigned after the usurpation of 1851, — retiring on the 7th of May, 1852. They allowed him to retain his lodgings where Turgot had formerly dwelt as Prior of the Sorbonne. Thenceforward his sole occupation was with the books he was writing and with those he possessed. He died at Cannes on the 13th of January, 1867.

CHAPTER II.

HIS PHILOSOPHY.

PIERRE LEROUX wrote a pamphlet against Cousin, which is very witty, highly amusing, and supremely unjust. He charges Cousin, of course, with being an eclectic; he also charges him with not being one. "Cousin," he says, "declares himself an eclectic, and affirms that he had three masters, — La Romiguière, Royer-Collard, and Maine de Biran. He borrowed something from the last two, and from the first nothing at all. What becomes then of the famous principle that every system is true by what it affirms, and false by what it denies?" Pierre Leroux is quite mistaken. Cousin borrowed much from La Romiguière: in the first place, he derived from him the habit of psychological observation; and secondly, he learned from him to study and know the phenomena of sensibility. He owes to him more than to his other masters, since he owes to him his initiation, his method, and a large share of the facts of human nature on which he bases

his system. La Romiguière taught him sensation, Royer-Collard intellect, and Maine de Biran will. Or rather they opened his mind, furnished suggestions. It was his personal reflection that showed him man first awakened by sensation, applying to sensation the laws of thought, and taking voluntary possession of himself to judge and direct his own acts.

Pierre Leroux admits elsewhere that man is, according to Cousin, made up of sensation, intellect, will. But these are three men, says Leroux, — three men studied separately, who would also live separately, if in this isolation they could live. It would be difficult to misunderstand more completely the doctrine attacked. Cousin repeats incessantly that man is entire in all the phenomena of which he is at once the theatre, the cause, and the spectator. Man's reflection may be more or less vigorous, but it is always active; and any phenomena that should take place in him without finding an echo in his consciousness would be as if they were not. Every analysis makes a distinction, but not every distinction makes a separation. The simultaneousness of our impressions, acts, and apperceptions is one of the greatest stumbling-blocks in psychology. The observer describes his sensation, but he sees it since he describes it, and pays attention to

it since he applies his method to it. Cousin knows and says all this; after his analysis he makes a synthesis. When he has separately shown each phase of the phenomenon, he shows that none of these phases would be possible in such isolation; and thus, after having disjoined, he puts together again.

What one might perhaps say of Cousin is that, though he was a sagacious and sometimes a profound observer, he was not a patient observer. He well understood the importance of psychology, he made it the basis of all his philosophy; but he did not pass long years, like Jouffroy and Maine de Biran, in looking into himself. During the first years of his teaching, when at the Normal School, he did not get beyond the question of the origin of ideas,—a psychological question if ever there was one; and Jouffroy, who was then his pupil, being chiefly interested in the problem of human destiny, said gloomily, "He puts philosophy into a hole." Jouffroy finally got used to this hole and remained in it, while Cousin at a single bound passed over the Scotch school, and went to Germany to be initiated into the philosophy of Nature.

At college, Cousin had learned the Greek and Latin that were taught there. He did not learn philosophy, because it was not taught;

and for the same reason he learned neither English nor German. A few people in France knew English; but German and Germany were completely unknown. Now, it was impossible for Cousin to remain in such ignorance. He was professor at the Sorbonne, not of philosophy but of the history of philosophy. He had read Madame de Staël's "Germany." He knew that Germany had become a mighty centre of ideas; if he did not know Kant's doctrine, he at least knew the noise it had made and the shock it had caused, and he blushed a little for our country, and a great deal for himself, that so important a movement was known only by hearsay. Great curiosity and a proper pride called him to Germany. He began by learning German, — he learned it poorly, — and by studying Kant in the barbarous Latin of Born. This made up the very scanty outfit with which, in 1817, he presented himself beyond the Rhine.

Here he found a very different world from that of our peaceful Sorbonne, where they were still trying to prove that there is nothing in the intellect not derived from the senses, except the intellect itself. Kant had been dead for thirteen years; but he had disciples all over Germany, and even philosophers found-

ing rival schools were full of him. All were striving to find a proof of the *non-ego*, — a problem carrying consternation into the minds of all psychologists and leaving the rest of the world in perfect calm. Kant thought with Plato, with Aristotle, with Descartes, with Leibnitz, and with M. Cousin, that reason is not an outcome of sensation; but that, on the other hand, reason awakened by sensation forms contingent ideas, regulates them, and links them together, by subordinating them to necessary ideas. Kant studied and classified these necessary ideas; and the more he felt their necessity the more difficult it appeared to him to know whether this necessity imposed on the *ego*, and from which there is no escape, settled anything beyond the being and the mode of existence of the *ego*. It is not impossible that we are so made as to believe in the existence of an imaginary *non-ego*. Berkeley had set up this hypothesis; then it had occurred to him that we have no way of getting out of the *ego* in order to judge of the *ego*; that consequently the *non-ego* will never be more than a probability. According to Berkeley, it is ten to one that the *non-ego* is a dream; but what matter, said he, since the dream produces on us the same effect as reality? Kant was not so easily satisfied. He

wished to be sure of his ground, and had found in reasoning from experience and in the principles of morality means of reassuring himself that did not appear satisfactory either to Jacobi or to Schelling.

Cousin returned to Germany in 1818. In 1824 he went thither for a third visit, and this, as we have seen, cost him dear. On these visits he met all the professors, both those who remained faithful to Kant's solution and those who were blazing a new route. He was everywhere welcomed. These learned men gave a hearty reception to the young barbarian who came to them in quest of light. He stayed for some time with Jacobi, who charmed him by his easy intercourse and his grace of expression. To Hegel he became peculiarly attached. Unrebuffed by Hegel's abrupt ways and his somewhat unsocial character, Cousin boasted of being the first to recognize this philosopher's genius and to foresee his great future. He also entered into continuous relations with Schleiermacher, who was before all else a scholar, though the scholar was combined in him with the philosopher; while Cousin himself, by virtue of his eclectic tendencies, was, or wished to be, a scholar. He saturated himself with German thought, and grew full of enthusiasm for German habits

and ideas, and for the distinctively German problem, — the famous problem of Kant. Hegel, not being versatile, admired the versatility of this young Frenchman, who when he entered Germany was but a disciple of Reid and Dugald Stewart, and who now pretty nearly understood Kant, Fichte, Jacobi, Schelling, yes, even Hegel, and thought himself competent to pass upon them. On his return to Paris Cousin found himself a different man. Without abandoning the Scotch school and Maine de Biran, he introduced into his teaching all the ideas astir beyond the Rhine, even adding to them some ideas which he regarded as his own discoveries, and which — so he thought — must settle the conquest of the *non-ego* for good and all.

Among these ideas of his own the impersonality of the human reason held the chief place. To succeed in establishing this, he first passed in review the different categories of reason, reducing them to two: the principle of substance, and the principle of causality. "Reason is nothing but the action of the two great laws of causality and substance."

When I apply my reason to one of the acts of my understanding, I perceive at once that it is impossible to conceive a phenomenon with-

out placing it in a substance, and referring it to a cause. But, says Kant, this impossibility is a law imposed upon my understanding; the fact that I am so made does not prove the external existence of this substance and this cause. The difficulty, Cousin replies, is that Kant only sees the principles of reason in their psychological manifestation; he sees that I see them and that I cannot help seeing them; he does not see them in themselves, apart from the understanding they illumine. Kant is a philosopher and a psychologist: he is even the greatest of psychologists; he reflects deeply on the forms of his thought, and discerns all its elements and all its shades. He forgets, or does not recognize, a mental condition anterior to reflection, and called by Cousin spontaneity, during which we perceive the principles of reason in themselves, not as necessary laws of our thought, but as absolute truths subsisting independently, and not requiring to be conceived in order to exist. This spontaneous perception of absolute truths, affording mankind a basis for faith, enables philosophers to escape the clutches of Kant's scepticism.

Doubtless it is difficult to give an account of spontaneity, because as soon as it is studied it disappears and makes way for reflection. But

spontaneity evidently always exists at the dawn of intellectual life; it is reproduced at intervals throughout life after man's reflective period begins, and the philosopher can even recover it by a supreme effort resembling those flashes of light darting at moments across our darkness, which Aristotle mentions in Book XII. of his "Metaphysics." Through spontaneity the *non-ego* ceases to appear hypothetical, and becomes a reality.

"Reason is somewhat like a bridge connecting psychology and ontology, consciousness and being; it rests at the same time upon both; it descends from God and condescends to man; it appears to consciousness like a guest bringing tidings from an unknown world, and making that world not only intelligible but necessary."

After having passed through reflection, philosophy reverts to spontaneity, and throws upon it a flood of light. "The universal harmony entering the mind of man gives it breadth and gives it peace. The divorce of ontology from psychology, of speculation from observation, of science from common sense, ceases in a method coming to speculation through observation, to ontology through psychology, and afterward confirming observation by speculation, psychology by ontology. This method, setting out

from the immediate data of consciousness upon which the common sense of mankind is based, from these data deduces science, which really contains nothing more than common sense raised to a severer and purer form, and interpreted to itself."

Speaking thus to the general public, Cousin was accused of being obscure. This was not his fault, but the fault of his public and of his situation. He was clear, extremely clear indeed; but it was the metaphysician's clearness, not that of the ordinary writer. The splendor of his eloquence attracted the crowd, while the thoughts he expressed were addressed only to a chosen few.

Once confident of the existence of the *non-ego*, thanks to the impersonality of the reason, and having through this discovery provided ontology with a solid basis, the next thing is to organize ontology as a science, and first to find God. We shall find God easily; for in order to make His existence certain, it is enough for us to have the conception.

God is in every intellectual act. Man cannot think without thinking of the *ego*, nor think of the *ego* without thinking of the *non-ego*, nor conceive the *ego* and the *non-ego* otherwise than as causes, nor conceive these causes otherwise than as in a substance. Now, since this makes

two causes and two substances, and since these causes cannot be really substantial, — both because they are stripped by their manifestly phenomenal and contingent character of all that is absolute and substantial, and because, being two, they are mutually limited and thus excluded from the category of substance, — it follows that reason must refer them to a single substantial cause beyond which nothing is to be sought with respect to existence; that is, with respect to cause and substance, "for existence is the identity of the two." Thus from our earliest intellectual activity we are in possession of the *ego*, of the *non-ego*, and of God. Cousin expresses this by the following formula: "From the first act of consciousness, the psychological unity in its triplicity is met, as it were face to face, by the ontological unity in its parallel triplicity," — which is the finite, the infinite, and their relation.

God here appears as substance and cause of the universe, because the universe cannot exist except in a substance and by a cause. Can God, on the other hand, exist without the universe? Is the infinite conceivable without the finite; the cause without the effect; the absolute cause without the total effect? If, to suppose an impossibility, we imagine God without the universe, it is a God who can be a cause

and is not so. In Him as in the universe there is a state of becoming, there is movement, variety, a before and an after, — all of which are ideas irreconcilable with absolute perfection. "The God of consciousness is not an abstract God, a solitary king, exiled beyond creation to the throne of a silent eternity and of an absolute existence which even resembles the annihilation of existence. It is a God both true and real, both substance and cause, always substance and always cause, being cause only inasmuch as He is substance, and substance only inasmuch as He is cause, — that is, being an absolute cause. He is one and several, eternity and time, space and number, essence and life, individuality and totality; beginning, middle, and end; at the top of the ladder of existence and at the humblest round; infinite and finite both together; a trinity, in fine, being at once God, nature, and humanity."

This statement remains famous because it has resounded in many a discourse directed against eclecticism. It is certainly magnificent. All of Cousin's doctrine is set forth in a grand style. It seems obscure, because the ideas are new and abstract. It is stately, because stateliness is in harmony with the majesty of the subject, and because the soul is moved and elevated in presence of the new and the grand,

— *avia Pieridum.*[1] The enemies of M. Cousin have insisted on considering this as pantheism, and it is very hard to prove them in the wrong. What is pantheism, if not the belief in the unity of the substance and the cause, *natura naturans?*[2] And what is a God who is at once God, nature, and humanity, if not the very God of Spinoza? It is Cousin who says that if God is not all, He is nothing; hence God is all. He says elsewhere that God cannot be, without being comprehensible, nor be comprehensible without including within Himself, together with unity and immutability, diversity and movement, — that is, the universe. "If God is in Himself absolutely indivisible, He is inaccessible and consequently incomprehensible, and to be incomprehensible is not to be."

Cousin seems later on to have returned to the incomprehensible God of the Christian Church, to the absolute unity of the Alexandrian and Eleatic schools, to the doctrine of creation, and even to that of creation *ex nihilo.*[3] But this creation does not establish a separa-

[1] "Lone by-ways of the Muses," from Lucretius I. 926:

"Avia Pieridum peragro loca nullius ante
Trita solo."

"The Muses' by-ways lone I traverse, — ways
By feet unworn." — TR.

[2] "Nature producing Nature."

[3] From nothing.

tion between the two substances. God creates, and creates from nothing, says Cousin, as I myself create my own acts, which are created from nothing, since they are the product of my free-will. This comparison, by interpreting the word "creation," destroys it. The universe, under such conditions, is distinct from God without being separate from Him; and according to this system the freedom of my acts, which is appealed to, only exists in me because of my imperfection. If God could not forbear creating, neither could He create otherwise.

After having described and explained man, Cousin describes and explains mankind; as he has related man's history, he relates the history of mankind. He finds here the same laws and the same progress. Just as he passes, in the case of man, from psychology to ontology, so he begins the history of mankind by the history of thought, that is, by the history of science. The divine science, which is the word, or λόγος, adequate to perfection and perfect as well, embraces the whole of being and the whole of science; while human science, aspiring toward divine science and reaching toward it ceaselessly by its efforts and its development, is progressive instead of being perfect. It is in a state of flux, like all that is finite; it streams up from the deeps to reach

the heights. It first applies itself to sensation; then, gaining strength, it studies reason and passes from sensationalism to idealism. Now it is that formidable problems crowd before the intelligence, and it becomes a prey to doubt. It doubts reason, not only on account of the apparent contradictions of reason, but even because of its character of necessity, its subjectivity. But as science cannot consist in doubt, it escapes from doubt by spontaneous insight into truth, whether this insight comes from religion, from poetry (the same thing), or whether it comes from philosophy, which has reached its most perfect form by the lapse of personality. Such are the four great systems that make up the history of human thought: sensationalism, idealism, scepticism, and mysticism.

These systems also fill the history of society. Society begins with simple faith; it passes through the epochs of analysis and discussion, — epochs terminating in criticism and negation, — and it takes refuge at last in the affirmation of a higher faith. The most perfect form of philosophy, as of society, results from blending in a final synthesis all the elements of former periods. A man arises who, as writer, general, or legislator, exerts enough sway over mankind to induce men to advance from de-

cadence to renaissance, from renaissance to criticism, and from criticism to full self-possession. The part which great men play is providential; by them God fulfils His designs. The token of genius is success. Mankind is at first simple, because it is near Nature; it becomes complex when the progress of civilization and reason causes progress in the sciences and arts. Philosophical analysis, by generalizing knowledge, setting up democracy, pulling down barriers, overcoming prejudices, and reckoning among prejudices religions and traditions, replaces the creative period by the period of scholarship. Progress then consists in the revival and co-ordination of differences.

Thus dawns the era of constitutional governments. Napoleon, suppressing individual initiative, formed but a factitious unity; the Charter established the true unity by recognizing and sanctioning differences, by subordinating them to justice, and by finding a place for them in a wise and beneficent hierarchy. The Restoration made the mistake of replacing this hierarchy of rights by the renewal of privileges, and rendered the Revolution of July almost inevitable. The victors of July in their turn did wrong to bring about a revolution instead of a simple evolution. The

elder line should have been preserved, but subjected to the salutary yoke of justice. The Charter was impaired after 1830, inasmuch as the transmission of the royal power became less certain; it was improved, in so far as equality amid diversity received a more effective sanction. It is the duty of good citizens and of philosophers to adhere to a form of government which, by giving a firm basis to order and liberty, renders the triumph of reason definitive.

Such, as a whole, is the philosophy of M. Cousin. Taking psychology as his starting-point, and eclecticism as his method, his doctrines are — the reduction of the categories of reason to the two principles of substance and causality; the existence of the *non-ego* based upon the impersonality of reason; a God, free, intelligent, personal, who is a necessary cause, and necessarily a cause; a system of morality, having freedom as its condition, duty as its rule, the immortality of the soul as its sanction; for a philosophy of the history of philosophy, the constant and regular succession of the four primordial systems; for a philosophy of the history of mankind, the glorification of success; for a political system, — instead of that variety without unity which is anarchy, or that unity without variety which

is despotism, — unity amid variety, that is, society organized upon the plan of Nature.

This system is all-embracing. It traverses the whole cycle of philosophy, from metaphysics to politics. It solves all the problems that divided men's minds at the beginning of this century. It refutes Locke's doctrine, which had been restored to honor, though with important modifications, by Condillac and the ideologists. It solves, or professes to solve, the great problem Kant had set for psychologists and metaphysicians. It pronounces upon the relations of God to the universe, upon the law of human existence, and upon the law of human society. As it stirs all questions, so it interrogates all schools, — the contemporary French schools, the Scotch school, the German schools, the French and other schools of the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries, the mediæval schools, the school of Alexandria (very closely), the Greek schools, the Oriental philosophy. Maintaining that in point of doctrine each system is true by what it affirms and false by what it denies; that every system contains a part of the truth; that all systems taken together contain the whole truth; that there is no more need to discover truth, but only to unite its scattered fragments, Cousin also holds that in matters of politics there is

in every form of government some justice, which becomes alloyed with injustice whenever one of the complex elements composing society is forgotten, sacrificed, or given a position not assigned to it by Nature. From one form must be taken the principles of stability, perpetuity, authority; from another, the principle of progress. We must sanction an aristocracy, —which is legitimate under certain conditions, and, moreover, necessary to the effectual working of authority. To democracy, we must grant equality before the law, — the right and the means of rising by dint of capacity and labor. In short, we must form a government uniting into one happy family forms of government that have long been deemed hostile. This system, by which all questions are solved according to the same principles and the same method, is eclecticism. It is altogether a mistake to say that M. Cousin has given us only fragments of a system, and fragments often contradictory; there are few systems so complete, embracing so many details, and reducing them so easily and so faithfully to a single principle. I do justice to the beauty, the scope, and the symmetry of the system, while at the same time I believe that a great many of the propositions making up this philosophy are false or questionable.

I quite agree with M. Cousin in his refutation of Locke. When this refutation was made, Locke was a power among us. Cousin does justice to him, and executes justice upon him. The Locke he describes is the genuine Locke, — that moderate sage of upright intentions and benevolent doctrine, that sagacious, laborious observer, to all prejudice a stranger, neither seeking nor shunning novelty, loyal to good sense in its true and useful features, and even in its superficial and vulgar ones, resembling those mighty philosophers described by Joseph de Maistre, who are afraid of spirits, and who esteem themselves eminently practical because they never see more than half of the reality. M. Royer-Collard had urged the claims of reason with authority; Victor Cousin now urged these claims with splendor; and the refutation of Locke, which from any other lips would have seemed dry, was from his lips irresistibly winning.

When Cousin reduced the principles of the reason to two, and preserved as irreducible only causality and substance, he thought that he had made a great advance in psychology. I think with him that the senses do not give us the idea of cause; they give us only phenomena. Consciousness may give us the idea of cause, together with the succession of psy-

chological phenomena; but it does not give us the conception that no phenomenon can be produced except by a cause and in a substance, for there is nothing either in consciousness or in the senses that expressly or virtually involves necessity. I inquire of M. Cousin whether the same thing does not hold true of the just and of the beautiful?

The senses and the consciousness give me nothing but pleasure and pain. They can never suggest to me the conception of sacrifice. They can never prove to me its necessity, because nothing necessary follows from their operations. By collating certain observations we can form a general law, but a law so formed is only a summary, a total; it is not a rule. The voice commanding me in certain cases to prefer pain to pleasure, to sacrifice my interest and even my life to the general interest, is an inner voice resounding in the depths of my reason, and speaking a different language from that of the world. I learned in M. Cousin's school that freedom as soon as exercised must submit to the yoke of duty; and that duty cannot be inferred from freedom, because duty is the sovereign master. How can this principle of the good, which comes to me from reason alone, be derived from the principle of causality or from the

principle of substances, if not for this metaphysical reason that an idea necessarily inheres in a substance, and the eternal idea in the eternal substance? Grant that it is inherent in substance, — still the idea I have of it is an idea absolutely different from the idea I have of substance. It is quite as different from the idea I have of cause, though I may be led by a series of philosophical speculations to think that there is no other reality, and consequently no other production or cause, beside what is classed with the good. Even this speculation, by which the idea of the good would be reduced to the idea of cause, proceeds from the idea of the good, and results from the more and more vivid and precise apperception of it formed by reflection. I say as much for the idea of the beautiful, which is not identical with the feeling of the present and the agreeable. It is not by repeatedly experiencing sensations that I train my senses; it is by the conception of an ideal independent of me and of every human intelligence, — an ideal better understood as mankind is elevated and purified, but one which mankind can neither originate nor change.

M. Cousin naturally attached great importance to the solution which he believed that he had found to Kant's famous problem. He

had rightly distinguished two stages in psychological phenomena: the spontaneous stage and the reflective stage. The phenomenon first occurs in the spontaneous stage, — that is, we see that it occurs but as if without heeding it, — and straightway, by a natural reaction requiring no effort of will on our part, we take a more complete possession of it. What renders this analysis of the two successive stages of the soul difficult, is that the attention is not completely absent, even from phenomena to which we pay no heed. If the soul did not perceive them at all, they would be to the soul absolutely as if they were not. In the spontaneous stage the soul has a confused conception of them, and in the reflective stage a precise conception. It is only a difference of degree, — a shade of difference rather than a difference. To make myself understood I shall have recourse to extreme cases. Sometimes it happens that a word is addressed to us which we do not hear. The speaker has closed his lips when we perceive what he said. Between the sensation produced by the spoken word, and our cognizance of the existence of this sensation within us, an interval has occurred. The fact that this cognizance has followed the modification of our sensibility, which is its object, only after an interval, is

not the result of our will, since our will could not be stimulated by a phenomenon that, to our consciousness, did not exist. It is manifest from this example that a sensation and an idea may be produced in us spontaneously. Suppose that at the very same moment our attention be called away to something else; this purely spontaneous idea will have passed through the mind like a dream, and generally without leaving any trace in our memory. The case most opposite to this results from methodical observation. In this case, we not only pay attention to an impression because it is a deep one and excites in us the will to insist upon it and understand it, but we also resolve to know its nature and character scientifically. To this end we retain it, reproduce it, modify it, while seeking its origin, noting its variations, and comparing its different aspects. The spontaneous act and the reflective act are two very different things. The interval between them can easily be filled up by reflection. This distinction is an ingenious one, and interesting psychological inferences may be drawn from it; yet it seems that properly speaking we have not two different states of mind to deal with, but merely two different degrees of the same state; for, even in the spontaneous state, the mind is attentive, al-

though its attention is distracted. Reflection is, as it were, only redoubled attention. If, therefore, I am not mistaken in this, if an impression not perceived is really no impression at all, it follows that duality exists in every psychological impression; and if duality exists, the problem also exists, and is as difficult of solution for the spontaneous state as for the reflective state.

What I have just said, referring especially to sensible impressions, is not less true of rational ideas. Certain ideas are presented to us by the natural force of the reason, — this is the teaching of all rationalistic philosophers, — and they can only be presented and become manifest to us through the medium of a phenomenon. In other words, without reason they would not exist; without the phenomenon they would not be perceived. This is precisely M. Cousin's teaching. Reason is the faculty of the infinite, as the senses and consciousness are the faculties of the finite; but the senses and consciousness cannot produce an idea without the reason, and reason cannot perceive the ideas inherent in itself without the discursive faculties. The whole man is in each phenomenon of man, in sensation, in intelligence, in will; and the whole intelligence is in each intellectual phenomenon,

in the senses, in the consciousness, in the reason, — in the finite, in the infinite, and in their relation. Cousin sees clearly man's unity, and proclaims it loudly; but he sees also the variety of his powers, and takes equal care to establish this. In psychology, in metaphysics, in history, in politics, his constant study is to discover unity in variety, and variety in unity; to distinguish, to analyze, but not to separate; to examine one after another the different elements of life, while insisting upon this main point: that all these elements coexist and co-operate in life and in each phenomenon of life, and that life is nothing more than the simultaneous development of all the powers that constitute our being. If this is his doctrine, — and the fact cannot be disputed, — how can he talk to us of an expiring consciousness, and of a reason embracing eternal verities without any intervention of the *ego* and of the consciousness? While using such language he is no longer of Descartes' school, he is the disciple of Proclus; he no longer speaks as a rationalist, but as a mystic. He puts a word in the place of an idea. When consciousness expires, the man expires. Only of God's thought was it possible to say that "thought is the thought of thought," because thinking itself, and thinking only itself, it has

no object distinct from itself. Yet the Alexandrians, coming after Aristotle, gave thought the second place in the divine Trinity, inasmuch as there is a subject and an object in every intellectual act, even when the subject thinking and the object thought are one and the same infinite Being. I say that the expiration of consciousness is the expiration of knowledge. Whether this spontaneous intuition precede reflection, — as it really does, — or whether it be produced after reflection, by a sort of inspiration like the ἕνωσις[1] of the Alexandrians, Cousin cannot appeal to it. He cannot appeal to it in the former case, for that would be to subordinate philosophy to ignorance; nor in the latter, for that would be to suppress reason in support of mysticism. His solution is but an illusion. By affirming that every thought contains the inseparable apperception of the *ego* and the *non-ego*, and that the apperception of every internal or external phenomenon supposes the simultaneous affirmation of a substance containing and producing the phenomenon, Cousin only avoids the difficulty of passing from the *ego* to the *non-ego*, — and that of the creation of the finite by the infinite, — by substituting therefor the greater difficulty of the confusion of the *ego*

[1] Union, oneness, unification.

and the *non-ego*, of the finite and the infinite, in the unity of substance and cause.

In truth, philosophy ascertains, describes, analyzes, rather than explains. It refers a phenomenon to its cause; this is not a complete explanation, it is only the beginning of an explanation, but this is all that philosophy can give. In no case can philosophy answer the question "How?" I am certain that the universe, being finite, does not exist of itself, and that it exists by the working of the infinite. But as to how the infinite produces the finite, I am ignorant. I must begin in every case by an act of faith, or else take refuge in scepticism. I have no other answer to Kant's problem, and to the one formulated by Cousin with regard to creation, — as we shall presently see, — except Galileo's answer: "The world revolves!"

While philosophers were striving to rediscover the universe that Kant had taken from them, many earnest souls who had no doubt about the existence of the universe, had much doubt about the existence of God. For some years France had been either without religion, or with only a clandestine one, and had been destitute of schools. The enlightened classes had learned from Rousseau, from Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (and from Robespierre?) a nat-

ural religion, which at bottom was but Christianity minus its mysteries and its revelation. Christianity was to them a sentiment rather than a belief; the shrewdest politicians accepted it as an instrument, as a social necessity. The Catholic religion itself was no more than that to the First Consul when he re-established it. This restoration of the Church in 1802 appeared to many of his partisans, and even to many of his courtiers, a piece of hypocrisy, and the beginning of a return to the Old Régime. Atheism based on reflection was taught by several ideologists; atheism due to indifference was widespread in the middle classes and in the army. It was the young men, rather than men of mature years, who felt agitated by the desire to believe, or at least to understand. The Imperial University, by virtue of its constitution, accepted the Catholic doctrine as the basis of its instruction. All those who were born with the century learned these doctrines at school or at college. When they went home again, they almost invariably found a father professing either atheism or indifference; hence arose in these young souls the uneasiness of which I have just spoken. Even politics was involved; for all royalists were believers, or pretended to be so. To

the great indignation of the liberals, the clergy assumed a large share in the government. It appeared equally impossible to believe what the clergy taught, and to oppose the clergy. To be a spiritualist, even without being a Christian, was quite enough to make one appear reactionary in the eyes of certain malcontents, and of such old revolutionists as might be left. Romanticism, when it broke out, introduced a new element. This element was neither Bonald's orthodoxy nor the poetry of Chateaubriand's Christian doctrine; it was the poetry of Christian art, and in particular of Gothic architecture. It was the worship of the stone edifices in which the Emperor had re-established the worship of Christ, as if in order to create and consecrate the worship of Cæsar. From 1815 to 1830, the great question in the *salons* was, "What think you of God?"

Jouffroy entered the Normal School in 1813, with an eager desire to know what philosophers could tell him on this subject. We already know that Cousin discoursed solely of the origin of ideas, and that Jouffroy exclaimed, "Philosophy is in a hole!" My generation, twenty years later, was still pursued by the same thoughts. What! God willed creation? The infinite willed the finite? There was a

God before creation and a God after; a God different from himself? The perfect God willed his creature imperfect? He willed it criminal? The problem of the fall, the problem of redemption, and what I should call the problem of the sacraments, disturbed our sleep. We found little external help. The refutation of Locke's sensationalism was continued at College and at the Normal School. The clergy, in exhortations made on purpose for us, gave us little but rhetoric. The ablest among them repeated Chateaubriand. Like Jouffroy, we asked philosophers to solve our doubts: we asked this of Jouffroy himself, and above all of Cousin, who was our oracle.

Cousin admitted the infinite. All his metaphysics and all his psychology were full of it. He distinguished with great care between philosophy and religion, and maintained with unshaken firmness the principle of the independence of philosophy; but at the same time he regarded religion as necessary. His own metaphysical beliefs did not differ from Christian metaphysics; at least he believed this to be the case, and wished it to be so. In his lectures and in the various philosophical works which he published up to 1830, God is everywhere to be found, creation and providence almost nowhere. These words are

hardly met with, and if at all, it is rather a matter of phrase than of reflection. He was one of those whom the word "creation" frightens, because it expresses a thing which, being analogous to no other, cannot be explained for lack of an analogue, and consequently appears impossible and absurd. After all, human learning explains "the how" of nothing. It takes refuge in comparisons. Where no comparison is possible, it plunges into blind faith, or into negation blinder still, if we think of it. Cousin thought that he had settled all by saying that the world is necessary to God, just as God is necessary to the world, — a theory wonderfully like Spinoza's *natura naturans*.[1] Among the Catholics the cry of pantheism was everywhere raised. In his preface of 1826, Cousin defended himself with great care, great skill, and great eloquence; because pantheism, although not a crime in philosophy, where all opinions have citizenship, was at that time a crime in the University and in the State. He proved conclusively that he had always taught the existence of freedom, in God and in ourselves; and freedom implies an existence not only distinct but separate. But men like Pierre Leroux on one side, and the Catholics on the

[1] Nature producing Nature.

other, maintained that even if this defence was successful in proving separate causes, — and this they did not concede, — it was by no means successful in proving plurality of substance. Cousin's defence was full of invectives against Spinoza, but full of Spinozism in its doctrines. What appears most clearly is, that Cousin was a pantheist, that he was interested in proving that he was not so, and that he honestly believed he was not so, because, while admitting the principle, he rejected and condemned the conclusions.

For my part, I do not see what is gained in clearness by preferring pantheism to creation. I dismiss as out of the question all the foolish charges of immorality brought against pantheists. Charges relating to tendency flourish nowhere so well as in metaphysics and in the quarrels of metaphysicians. Were I required to mention a moralist perfectly pure and perfectly irreproachable, I should mention the pantheist Cousin; and I should freely say that Spinoza, who is still more of a pantheist, or rather more incontestably so, is a saint. But could Cousin believe it to be an intelligible doctrine that this universe, not in itself necessary, is yet eternally necessary to God; that this universe, essentially changeable, is eternally produced by a

Being whose principal attribute is unchangeableness; that this world, where all is imperfect, where evil has so large a share, is the necessary manifestation of a perfect intelligence and of an infinite power? After having set forth in magnificent language the unity, the eternity, the unchangeableness of God, how could Cousin set forth on the next page, in language not less magnificent, that this same God cannot be a solitary king, that evil and the finite are necessary to His perfection, that they are in Him, — a statement which looks like saying that they are He? Cousin found the same assertion in Saint Augustine. This is, it may be, a lucky find for an advocate, but what is such an argument in the mouth of a philosopher?

By this same argument, as he avowed, he proclaimed the unity of substance. Did he establish as firmly as he believed the duality of cause? When he says that he makes God a free cause, does he not seem to forget those famous pages in which he set forth that it is as necessary for God to create as it is for the universe to have a Creator? There is in his "Xenophanes and the Eleatics," which was first inserted as an article in "Universal Biography," and afterward became one of his best books, a curious passage, in which he first supposes, as all his teaching obliged him

to suppose, that there is one and only one substance, namely, God, substance and cause, from whom are produced all the phenomena that make up the variable form of this universe. Although these phenomena exist in His substance and proceed from His will, they are distinct from Him, if indeed they are not separate from Him! But how far distinct? To which does the entity belong? Does it belong especially to the world, as the Ionians thought, or to God, as the Eleatics would have it? To the Ionians, God is little more than the totality of phenomena. To the Eleatics, the world is no more than a dream, a shadow, an empty show. And yet — this saying escapes Cousin's lips — of these two solutions the one is as natural as the other; that is to say, he is not able to choose between them. Indeed, at the close of this article he proposes to return to the belief of common-sense; and thus the last word of science is an abdication.

What he proposed in this article he held throughout his philosophical career. We have seen that he declared God's incomprehensibility to be equivalent to His destruction, and that He would necessarily be incomprehensible if He remained absolutely indivisible; then we have seen him inclining toward the perfect

unity of the Alexandrians and the Eleatics, at the same time that he sought in the absence of reflection, that is in unification, the solution of the problem of ontological reality; finally, we have seen him, after having oscillated from Spinoza to Xenophanes, suddenly appeal to common sense, — to the ancient faith of our fathers, — preserving intact his belief in dogmas while giving up systematic explanation of them. This is what I call renouncing metaphysics without renouncing natural religion. It is a hardly disguised scepticism concerning systems, a confident and absolute faith in dogmas. I cut short the objections, as I have cut short my summary of the system; I merely wish to give indications. It is the man, more than anything else, that I study in M. Cousin.

I have only eulogies to bestow on the fundamental principles of his morals. He is a great and pure moralist. He has not gone so deeply into questions of morals as some of his disciples. But Franck, Caro, Janet, who will leave a luminous trace in ethics, proceed directly from him. He laid down the true principles with the sure hand of a master; he unfolded them in that grand style of which he knew the secret, — a style which uplifts and strengthens the soul. Here again it must be

remembered that he rescued us from the honest but narrow school of the ideologists, — a school of right precepts and false principles. He was the first in a long time to refer duty to its true source, which is reason, and to study duty in its true character as an absolute and inviolable rule. Feeling was given its place as a useful auxiliary, — but a mere auxiliary, whose proper function is to render obedience easy, and which should never usurp the master's place. He summed up his moral doctrine admirably in the book called "The True, the Beautiful, and the Good," into which he put all of his teaching that need be preserved, and all that he wished to have preserved. As to ethics at least, he has nothing to erase, nothing to change. As often as he encountered a moral question, whether in writing or speaking, he treated it in the same spirit, surely, firmly, soberly. I have but one fault to find, a serious fault: it concerns what he himself called the absolution of success, — a doctrine in which is involved the theory of necessary men.

How can the doctrine of duty, which is so often the doctrine of sacrifice, be reconciled with the absolution of success? How can success be separated from force? The right is either invincible or it is not so. How can the duty of obeying force be given a place beside

it? If the victory of force gives absolution, then the difference between crime and virtue is one of dimensions only. As soon as we depart from the absolute sovereignty of right and duty, which are the two forms of eternal justice among men, we fall into fluctuating morals which are opposed to morality. Never was a man more constantly crowned by success than Bonaparte up to his Russian campaign; hence no man ever had more genius than he had for fifteen years, nor more right to obedience. What sort of morality is this; and what sort of philosophy of history? A cannon-shot fired at Waterloo transfers to another the genius and the right to impose obedience. It was only up to this moment that Bonaparte was great and legitimate. In spite of all Cousin can say, the theory of success is the contradiction of duty, just as the theory of providential men is the contradiction of liberty. The supporters of such theories demand freedom in metaphysics and politics, and admit fatalism in history!

It was this same Cousin who uttered the fatalistic saying, "Heroes must be pardoned the stepping-stones to their greatness;" and this other, "No one was conquered at Waterloo."

Some one was conquered at Waterloo, and that one was Napoleon, and I shall presently show that there was still another; but Cousin

means that Napoleon was not, or had ceased to be, France. Napoleon no longer had the strength to govern; hence he no longer had the right. He began to be conquered in Russia; hence he ceased to be great. How does this differ from the language of one who confounds justice with interest? Cousin errs in his historical doctrine, because he follows Hegel. He is much truer, much more himself in his moral doctrine, which is contradicted by his historical doctrine. His heart was never with Napoleon, even when Napoleon's genius and success seemed infallible. Cousin felt that Napoleon was the enemy of right. In those last years, when the soldier of Vendémiaire and Brumaire was seized by the mania for universal sway, Cousin felt him to be his country's enemy. All hearts and minds were disturbed at this fatal time, even the greatest. Guizot sets out for Ghent; Cousin, acting with as much decision though in greater obscurity, enlists in the royal volunteers. He goes to Vincennes to fight the enemy of liberty and to aid the enemy of his country. They said one to another: *Ubi libertas, ibi patria.*[1] Posterity sees more clearly; it has better disentangled the elements of a situation so complex. It is for the native country against the foreigner. The foreigner defeated

[1] Where liberty is, there is our country.

and driven back, it would have been for right against the despot.

There were two conquered at Waterloo: for Bonaparte we could be consoled, but for France we ought even to-day to remain inconsolable. If it had not been for 1815, there would have been no 1870. Sedan is the sequel to Waterloo. Cousin's phrase was almost impious, but its effect was to give him greater importance. Instead of seeing in it a double historical error and an error in morals, people looked upon it as the height of patriotism. This phrase sounded like a revenge. Watchwords and banners lead men oftener than arguments and reason. The day when Gambetta found his phrase (his first phrase), "We are the irreconcilables," he gained half the battle. And Proudhon, with all his great talent and his vigorous polemics that no one now reads, may be summed up in the two phrases, "God, withdraw!" and "Property is theft." He was sorry for them, suffered from them, took them back. To Baroche, who said to him, "You do not believe in God," he replied, "How do you know?" But what could he do? On the strength of these two sayings he was christened atheist and communist. A tribune may formulate phrases, especially if he is nothing but a tribune. The duty of a philosopher is to be circum-

spect; the imagination is his enemy. This is what caused it to be said of Cousin by a powerful but malevolent critic, that he was not so much a philosopher as a philosophical orator.

Perhaps he gave way to an orator's fondness for brilliant formulas when he put forth his theory — long regarded as irrefutable, but now rather out of fashion — of the alternation of the four systems: each epoch beginning with sensationalism, rising afterward to idealism, passing through scepticism, and finally plunging into mysticism. This is clever and brilliant, but not true. It is philosophical romance. Pythagoras and the Eleatics partake more of idealism than Plato; Plato was only succeeded by the Alexandrians after a long interval; his immediate successor was Aristotle. In support of his theory, Cousin was obliged to transform the stoics into spiritualists. He had less trouble with the mediæval schools, because, being unacquainted with them, he easily made them correspond to his classification.

I do not mean that he was lacking in philosophical erudition. He was not a rival of Schleiermacher nor of Ansse de Villoison. His mind was occupied with something besides philological discoveries. Nevertheless he translated Plato, and edited Proclus and Descartes.

His studies on Abelard were excellent and numerous. There were strange gaps in his learning. I can bear witness that, after having translated almost the whole of Plato, he knew Aristotle only through to M. Ravaisson's book. The translation of Book XII. of Aristotle's Metaphysics, published by him in 1837, is a task that I performed in his class at the Normal School in 1836. I read my translation to him. He made very few changes in it, and the changes he made were not always felicitous. We perceived that he was altogether a novice in this study; and when I afterward re-read our joint production, having become a little more familiar with the works of Aristotle, I found in it more than one mistranslation. Cousin's knowledge of Greek was that of a man of letters, not that of a scholar; and Aristotle's Greek is almost a tongue apart. There is no Hellenist who understands Aristotle as well as Barthèlemy Saint-Hilaire, who is, properly speaking, no Hellenist at all.

Cousin was impelled to translate Plato by his own tastes as a great writer and a spiritualistic philosopher; it was also of set purpose that he edited Proclus and Descartes. His studies on Abelard and Pascal were only incidents in his life, — the discovery of a manuscript, a controversy engaged in. Proclus,

however, lay very near his heart. In the Alexandrians he studied the doctrine of unity and that of the trinity. It was here rather than in Leibnitz that he found eclecticism.

He identified himself with the eclectic method, which gave the name to his philosophy. What then is eclecticism? It is much, and it is nothing. It is a little like opportunism, — something which no one can reject when confined to its beginnings, but which no one can accept when pushed to its ultimate consequences. If opportunism means that everything must be done seasonably, at an opportune time, it is a platitude; if it means that we must change with circumstances, and prefer whatever opinion serves our turn, it becomes a shameful thing.

In the same way every one will accept eclecticism, if it is solely a question of taking from each school whatever there is in it that is true and sensible. But professional eclectics give to it greater depth of meaning. They begin by laying down the principle that each system is true by what it affirms and false by what it denies. This seems very profound; yet it is really a bit of useless verbal jugglery. Materialism, they say, is true in that it affirms the existence of matter and exactly defines its attributes; it is false in what it denies, for

spirit exists, although materialism denies its existence. Very good; but the formula is inaccurate, because spiritualism does not imply the negation of matter. And how can scepticism be true by what it affirms, when it affirms nothing? It is true when it doubts what is doubtful, and false when it doubts what is certain. Of scepticism this is all that can be said with any regard for the truth; but when this is said, no great discovery is made! And mysticism, — what is its share in the truth, I query? On the one hand, it denies reason; on the other, it affirms the trance and clairvoyance in the trance. It is mistaken throughout. What becomes of the formula? Let us take an example from some particular doctrine, that of Malebranche for instance. Malebranche denies the direct action of spirit on matter; he is wrong in what he denies. He affirms physical predetermination; is he right in what he affirms?

The first claim of eclecticism is therefore to be rejected. The second is, that everything is already discovered. Henceforward nothing new is to be found. All truths are scattered through the four systems. We need only go and seek them with a view to uniting them into one general synthesis. This second formula is still stranger than the first, for we

ask, "At what time did this begin to be true?" I know very well that Plato, being a great lover of traditions and a great admirer of the past, affirms that the Egyptians possessed from remote antiquity all the treasures of human wisdom; and I acknowledge that Aristotle takes care to connect each of his opinions with an opinion of some philosopher before him. It is indeed true that the discoveries of our predecessors ought not to be lost to us. But does it follow that we cannot make discoveries in our turn? Among philosophical doctrines is there none which belongs exclusively to Plato or to Aristotle? What says M. Cousin himself? That we must continually study the human consciousness; that this book is more instructive than all of those which are piled up in libraries. The eclectics, by their second formula, fall into the sophism which consists in attributing to the whole what is true only of a part. It is true that many truths have been discovered; but it is false that there are none left to be discovered, and that we are reduced to live by borrowing.

Once infatuated with eclecticism, a man is not only disinclined to think for himself, but he enters the schools of teachers utterly opposed to one another in a settled spirit of

docility and conciliation which induces him to accept a little from each and to unite opposites. This extreme aptness to conciliate has for its first effect to destroy the conciliator; he becomes a nobody because he belongs to everybody. He generalizes to excess, he overlooks distinctions, and without distinctions there are no ideas. It is idle for the eclectics to defend themselves from the charge of syncretism. They do not think they are syncretists, they do not wish to be so, but they are so by force of circumstances. An eclectic is not a philosopher, he is a sort of echo repeating all sounds. Nor is he an intelligence, for he admits all opinions; nor a will, since he belongs to any one who will take him. I know very well that I am here caricaturing eclecticism. Cousin, in particular, and Leibnitz before him, had too much worth, too much native force, to give way to this tendency. For them, eclecticism was not philosophy, but an aid to philosophy. They had masters of opposite tendencies whose doctrines they excelled in harmonizing; but they themselves were masters. They discovered, created; they were poets, like all great philosophers. They escaped the disadvantages of their method, thanks to their individual superiority.

At bottom, in Cousin's doctrine as a whole,

there are many truths, and there are yet more chimeras. I should like to apply to him his own formula, in a modified form, by saying that he is true in what he describes and false in what he explains. He describes very well the senses, the will, the different faculties of the understanding. He shows very plainly that motion must depend upon the stable, the ephemeral upon the eternal, the finite upon the infinite. But he neither explains how the *ego* knows the *non-ego*, nor how the body acts upon the mind and the mind upon the body, nor how the infinite creates the finite, nor how the finite knows the infinite, appeals to it in prayer, obtains its intervention, or profits by its guidance. He repeats, as all philosophers do, that philosophy is the science of causes. Philosophy finds causes, shows the effects of causes, names and classifies causes; but it never explains them. It is the nomenclature, not the science, of causes. It knows the *how* of nothing.

M. Janet, in his profound and admirable book on Victor Cousin, asserts that Cousin constantly had the metaphysical fever. He had it constantly from 1814 to 1830. It was a long attack, — long enough, I think, for his fame as a metaphysician. The fever abated in 1830, when he set his hand to the government of society. To the fever for discovering the se-

cret of things, — the metaphysical fever proper, — succeeded in his case the fever for controlling and regulating minds; that is, the political fever in its noblest form. For I agree with M. Janet that Cousin always had the fever; but I differ from my friend and former pupil, — M. Janet will permit me to recall that I once had the honor of being his professor, though I had not the greater honor of being his master, — I differ from M. Janet in affirming that if Cousin had the fever in 1830 as in 1829, it was no longer the same fever.

He is not worn out, but he is disenchanted. There is no flinching as to doctrines; as to all explanations he hesitates. He firmly believes in the *non-ego;* he suspects that the conclusions he has drawn from the impersonality of the reason are not beyond attack. He continues to maintain and even to prove that he is no pantheist; he feels at heart that he could prove it more peremptorily if he had insisted less on the necessity of creation and the unity of substance. He is indignant that M. de Broglie should see any dangers in the diffusion of metaphysical problems; but he acknowledges that they should not and cannot be diffused beyond the ranks of the upper classes of society; that it is desirable that philosophy should not unsettle Christianity; and that, in

brief, religion is necessary to the happiness of some and the security of others. He is not, as his enemies say, a penitent philosopher, inasmuch as he maintains, in theory, the absolute independence of philosophy; but he is more than ever a circumspect philosopher. He has been the apostle of philosophy; he becomes its magistrate.

I sustain this against M. Janet in two ways: by what Cousin abstained from doing, and by what he did. He had been debarred from teaching in 1820, when he was only twenty-eight years old. At this time he held no public office and practised no profession. For seven years his time was wholly his own. He made good use of it by beginning his translation of Plato, by editing Proclus and Descartes. All his friends, his former hearers, the pupils at the Normal School, thought that he would profit by his freedom to compose a great doctrinal work. When people saw that he was employed on works of mere erudition, the disappointment was general. "Everybody is surprised and discontented," said Jouffroy in a "Globe" article. "Whatever time M. Cousin does not employ in writing a book on philosophy, appears to every one lost time. I shared this sentiment at first," he added, "and I still continue to believe that it is lost time for

M. Cousin's fame. But upon reflection I no longer believe it to be lost time for philosophy. In fact, philosophy is complete. It is scattered through the various schools," etc. Here you see the eclectic. But M. Jouffroy's theory is refuted by M. Jouffroy's practice; for he has constantly made original observations, and history only on occasion.

Eclecticism consoled this new Melanchthon for the silence of the new reformer. Not being an eclectic, I refuse to accept M. Jouffroy's explanation. It might merely be said that M. Cousin was at this time dissatisfied with the solutions that he had at first proposed, and that he made his trip to Germany to find and bring back new ideas. Nevertheless, it was a first attack of discouragement. But in 1830, at the age of thirty-eight, Cousin had no thought of seeking new teachers. He again went to Germany, not this time in the interests of philosophy, but of primary and secondary instruction. He continued to hold his chair; he might re-occupy it if he pleased. He would again meet with the success he had in 1828 and 1829. Glory is, as it were, within his grasp, — a popularity that nothing could equal, nothing could replace. No, he will teach no more; his decision is final. Does he then take as a substitute an eloquent disciple, another

self, a Jouffroy, for instance? Not at all. Jouffroy is teaching on his own account. Cousin selects as a substitute M. Poret, a man neither celebrated, nor eloquent, nor profound, and not even of his school. For twenty-one years he persists in supplying a substitute; in 1852 he retires.

It would be idle to allege that he continued, for some years after 1830, to give a course of lectures at the Normal School. This course of lectures was given once a week, on Sundays. It was given to third-year students in philosophy, rarely more than two or three. It was neither a course in philosophy nor a course in the history of philosophy. It was a drill preparatory to the examination for fellowships. It was the nature of the course that decided Cousin to give it up, because being president of the board of examiners, he could not prepare pupils for examination. In 1836 he did no more than to read with us Book XII. of Aristotle's Metaphysics. He did the same in 1837; and that was the last year he taught in the school. He often talked of something besides what we were reading. Now it was a question in philosophy that he suddenly broached, now one in literature; he would even talk with us of drawings and paintings, as Michelet used to do in his lectures to the second-year students. Cousin's lectures were

hardly more than chats; it seemed as if he were making us a call. Armand Carrel died in that year. It was I who announced that his life was despaired of, that at Saint-Mandé they had given up all hopes. Cousin began to weep, and the sight of his tears touched and surprised us. The following Sunday he talked to us simply of Carrel, with inexhaustible fervor; and then passed to politics. He returned to politics again in subsequent lectures, and gradually all this talk on politics passed from the government of France to the government of the classes we should have the next year. It is impossible for those who were present at these lectures, or rather at these conversations, to regard them as the continuation of M. Cousin's career as a teacher. If they must be given a name, I should call them a series of observations on Aristotle's philosophy, of which Cousin's knowledge was but slight, and on the condition of professors of philosophy, which he understood better than anybody else. I can, then, say that he ceased to teach in 1830. At all events, he utterly abandoned teaching after 1837. If he did have a pupil in 1836, it was I; for it was seldom that he did not keep me with him two or three hours on a Sunday, turning over books in his library when it rained, or strolling in the Luxembourg Gardens when

it was fine. He talked to me about all things, philosophy among the rest; but he did not seem to me like a general seeking new conquests, he rather resembled a conqueror satisfied with what he possesses, with no thought but of strengthening and organizing his dominion. His career as a professor was ended, and so was his career as a philosopher.

In fact, the book that Jouffroy had vainly sued for in 1820 did not come after 1830. Cousin kept on writing: he did not write his great philosophical work. This mere fact is of itself conclusive proof. He multiplied new editions, composed prefaces. When these prefaces refer to doctrines, they are mainly on the defensive. His tone is that of the superintendent, not that of the professor. His only philosophical work is his translation of Plato, or his volumes on Abelard, or his treatise on Pascal; that is, philosophy trenching on literature, the history of philosophy, erudition rather than doctrine. By degrees he publishes his former courses of lectures, sometimes as they were delivered, sometimes in a more systematic form, as in the case of "The True, the Beautiful, and the Good." But if we look closely at these publications, we see that their aim is not to extend his teaching by advancing new views, but to tone

down his former teaching by taking from it what was venturesome or dangerous, — a solicitude worthier of the magistrate than of the philosopher. The philosopher would never have consented to the suppressions and changes which the magistrate imposed. I do not say that this revision is the work of a convert, — I do not go to such a length. Neither do I say that he had ceased to believe his own teachings; but I do aver that he had grave doubts about his explanations and his theories. If he had made a catechism of his doctrines, as he perhaps did for the Catholic doctrine, it would have been of the most spotless orthodoxy. This accords with a very ancient custom: the Platonists, and above all the Pythagoreans, had an esoteric and an exoteric doctrine. Cousin had no esoteric doctrine until 1830.

CHAPTER III.

HIS REGIMENT.

M. HACHETTE, the founder of the celebrated publishing house, when transformed from a professor into a publisher, took for his motto these words: *Sic quoque docebo.*[1] In like manner M. Cousin could say, when he ceased to be a professor in order to become the leader and inspirer of all professors, that he was but extending, and in a manner generalizing, his instruction. Let us form a clear conception of the moral and material situation at that time; for since then nothing has been produced that resembles it even remotely.

In France, M. Cousin passed for a very obscure but profound philosopher, who had blasted with his thunderbolts ideology and sensationalism, and founded for ages to come a great school of philosophy. He was not so highly thought of in Germany, where he was sometimes accused of cribbing from Schelling

[1] Thus, too, I shall teach.

and Hegel, and was regarded, not without reason, as a disciple of these two great men; his improvements upon their systems of philosophy were hardly taken seriously; yet he was looked upon as a very open-minded man, assimilating promptly and readily the substance of other thinkers, sufficiently well versed in antiquity and literature, highly ingenious, ardent, eloquent, beyond contradiction the first of Frenchmen, and almost worthy to have studied at Bonn and Göttingen. In France, he had been condemned to silence by the reactionary government; in Germany, thrown into dungeons, as he was fond of saying, by a despotism. The crowds which assembled in the great amphitheatre of the Sorbonne and overflowed into the court were wont to greet his appearance with frantic outbursts of applause. Stretching forth his hand to command silence, he began in vibrant tones, but slowly, like one still groping for his thought, in words grave, strong, picturesque, to promulgate his oracles to that great audience of impassioned youth, of scholars, of adversaries, of old men crowding the benches to hear him. The auditors fancied themselves admitted to share in the toil of thought; but what they witnessed was merely its production upon the stage. It was a thrilling sight. When,

on a sudden, he opened up a vast horizon, or found one of those formulas which forever remain stamped upon the memory, haunting our thoughts and dreams, enthusiasm was at its height. He was emaciated, he seemed to be in pain, his whole body was trembling with that famous metaphysical fever, more violent than the poet's frenzy and as fertile in great results. His eyes literally flashed fire. He rarely smiled, rarely spoke impetuously, and yet we felt that he could be brilliant in every way. This great orator, this great thinker, was hostile to the enemy, — that is, to the counter-revolution ; he had made the ministers of the Restoration tremble; he was the prophet of the liberal party, the teacher and revealer of the future. He was the veritable idol of the students, and, though these young men did not know it, he was at the same time the idol of society, for which he made his profundity palatable by coupling it with endless charms of manner; he was, besides, a writer of high rank, — something which cannot always be said of talented orators, — worthy to understand Plato, and the only man of his time worthy to translate Plato.

After the July Revolution he did not again occupy his chair. Every one reckoned him among the victors, although he had not been

among the combatants. He had found fault with the Ordinances; he was really opposed to M. de Polignac, but he was not opposed to Charles X., and thought that without a revolution there might have been a return to a wise interpretation of the Charter. He proclaimed this loudly at first. But he had to do little violence to his feelings in becoming a supporter of the new government. He was not one of the victors, but he was the friend of the victors, and favors rained down upon him amid the plaudits of the multitude. The multitude is an embodiment of caprice. At one time it wishes its leaders to be men of the Brutus stamp, devoted to the good of all and pitiless to themselves; at another, it likes to pamper them, to make them great, to deck glory with all the trappings of vainglory. The multitude took the latter course with Cousin; it was pleased to make him, at the age of forty, a member of two Academies, a Councillor of State, a peer of France, Full Professor in the Sorbonne, supreme head of the Normal School, and a member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction. This petty professor, born in a garret and inured to persecution, became on a sudden a great lord. He pleased the people in this new incarnation. He was one form of the popular victory.

All this promotion came to him within three years. He became Full Professor, member of the French Academy, State Councillor Extraordinary, in 1830; member of the Royal Council, member of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, and Director of the Normal School, in 1832; and the next year he became a peer of France. Nothing now remained but the ministry, to cap the climax of human greatness; he became a minister in 1840. We cannot at the present time imagine the power and prestige conferred by all these dignities. The Revolution of 1830 had taken away much of their meaning; but the Revolution of 1848 made them meaningless. One of Louis Philippe's peers was a mere upstart compared with a peer of France under Charles X.; but the senators and State Councillors of today do not admit of comparison with those of King Louis Philippe. That the University should have its bench of bishops in the Upper House, — M. Villemain, M. Cousin, Baron Thénard, Georges Cuvier, — seemed in itself a revolution. In Parliament, M. Cousin could hold his own against a field-marshal, and the field-marshal had to mind what he was about. But hardly anything is so far from our manners and customs as the old Council of Public Instruction.

To-day we have a Council made up of forty-eight members. Among them are five or six schoolmasters, — not to mention a schoolmistress, — elected for a term of three years by their fellows; also some teachers in communal colleges and inspectors of various classes. The Council is so made up, according to the framer of the law, on the principle of competency, since no one is more competent than the mistress of an infant school to look after the instruction given by a Professor of Astronomy in the College of France. The members of this Council meet at Paris twice a year, for a week. They decide all questions of discipline, grant all licenses, discuss, in summary fashion, all rules and regulations. Proposed regulations are sent to their respective addresses on Monday; on Tuesday they vote; and on Wednesday they can read their decrees in the "Official Journal." An admirable institution, giving all the authority to three directors, and all the responsibility to forty-eight councillors, whose very names are unknown; who do not even know one another!

When M. Cousin entered the Royal Council, the councillors numbered eight. Each of them represented a department of instruction over which he had absolute control. There were men of letters such as M. Villemain,

chemists such as M. Thénard, mathematicians such as M. Poisson. Men of this stamp were not only the chiefs of their order, they were its glory and its model. The name of the Minister of Public Instruction was Guizot; and M. Guizot was the ablest man and beyond question the greatest orator in the cabinet. M. Thiers did not take rank beside him until later. Absorbed by politics in the larger sense, M. Guizot interfered in the government of the University only at rare intervals, to give an opinion or a direction; he did not trouble himself about either the appointments or the details; for such work he had eight councillors, eight ministers. The instruction in philosophy was entirely under M. Cousin's control. He drafted his decisions, read them to his colleagues for form's sake, and sent them by a secretary to the minister's office, where they were signed by the minister, also for form's sake. A fine sight it would have been to see M. Cousin disputing M. Thénard's orders touching chemistry, or M. Thénard putting in his word about psychology!

M. Cousin used to say that the instructors in philosophy formed his regiment; but it was then a regiment whose colonel was a Marshal of France. He had every hold upon the members of this regiment. In the

first place, he was the head of the Normal School. He had this advantage over his colleagues in the Council. He had in this school, subject to his orders, the Director, M. Guigniaut, who was a most excellent man, and had but one fault, — that of being too learned for a Frenchman. In truth, the only director was M. Cousin, who looked after everything: finances, regulations, discipline, instruction. He appointed the professors, made or revised the programmes for literary and philosophical work, attended to the pettiest details. He lived in the Sorbonne, where he occupied a fine suite of rooms crowded with his books; the Normal School was a few steps away, in the shabby and ruinous buildings of the old Du Plessis College, which had been annexed — in the eighteenth century, at the time of the reform of the old University — to the College of Louis the Great. It was in these buildings that Cousin had begun his lectures in 1814 as Royer-Collard's substitute; but the little room with which his predecessors had been satisfied became almost immediately too small for him, and he had been obliged to reopen the great hall of the Sorbonne, which is inconvenient but vast. When the Du Plessis College had once been abandoned by the faculties, the Normal School —

relegated since 1810 to the upper rooms of the College of Louis the Great — was installed in the old building. The school was provided with a large dormitory, a large study-room, a large dining-hall, a small library, three small rooms in which all the lectures were held, and for a promenade, with a rather long and gloomy alley planted with a few scrubby trees and shut in on three sides by the building, and on the other by a long high wall separating it from the College of France. The school communicated directly with the College of Louis the Great, which supplied the students with victuals, and gave them the use of its hospital and chapel. In the course of the day there were three recesses of a half-hour each, during which the pupils kept walking rapidly up and down this long alley, and talking at a great rate about politics, or about romanticism, which was hotly discussed, or about the Abbé Lacordaire, who had not yet become a Dominican, and was beginning his lectures at Stanislas College.

Frequently M. Cousin was seen coming in unexpectedly to call on M. Guigniaut. The bravest trembled at the sight of him. He appeared very tall because he was very thin, and in winter he wore the strangest costume imaginable. He wore a gray hat and a long great-

coat of blue barracan having three capes lined with red plush, and he carried a cane. Those flashing eyes peering from under his gray hat, and darting glances at us as he passed, gave him the air of an ogre seeking whom he might devour. We knew that he was not unkind; but he was fantastic, and fond of being thought inexorable. He was subject to unlucky freaks, like that, for instance, of depriving us of our Thursday. M. Guigniaut was afraid of him as well as we, though they had passed a whole year together on the benches of the Normal School. The wishes of M. Cousin were communicated to us by M. Guigniaut, whom we held responsible for them; and M. Guigniaut's popularity, which should have been considerable, rather suffered from this circumstance. So long as M. Cousin was there, the school felt oppressed by the dread of some unknown misfortune. I suppose this feeling is the natural result of the proximity of a sovereign master. When the master came out, he used to like to accost some one of us; we were wont to walk fast, but he rushed along still more rapidly, brandishing his cane and shouting at the top of his voice. He took no pains to speak by the card; he served up to us whatever ideas came into his head, and whatever words first offered, speaking with incredible

fire, losing sometimes a little of his dignity but never a jot of his authority. We admired and trembled. Sometimes we were sorely tempted to laugh, — I still blush for it; the reason was that we did not understand him, or that he abused his superiority by making a little fun of us. It should also be urged in our defence that he was often eccentric enough. When he had hit upon a paradox, he would push it to the verge of extravagance, especially if he perceived our bewilderment. We thought him a great genius, but somewhat mad. Never was man more sensible; only he had such ways and used such words that it required time to learn their secret. He took great delight in talking to us of our future, promising us, with much condescension, places so far below our hopes that the mere thought made us shudder. "As for you, Simon," said he to me, "I cannot promise you Pontivy, though it is in the centre of your province. I shall try; I am forming combinations. It may be, if you stand first in your class, that I can bring it about." Pontivy was the last of the royal colleges, without pupils, without resources; it was a little town — hardly more than a village — lost in the midst of lower Brittany. To be relegated thither was looked upon as a punishment. He said to Saisset, the best scholar of us all; "With labor

and perseverance you may aspire to anything, even to a place as inspector of schools!" Cousin's air, as he said this, of profound respect for that exalted position, was well worth seeing. Some years later I was at his rooms in the Sorbonne, whither I had gone to give him some notes for a speech that he was preparing on trade-marks. A servant brought him the card of an instructor of the fifth or sixth form in the College of Nantes. "What a bore!" said he. "I cannot deny myself to him: he was my school-fellow at the Normal." To shorten the ceremony, he received him standing. His friend said with real emotion, "How glad I am to see you!" Cousin's looks replied, "Now that you have seen me —" "My children outside are longing to have the pleasure —" That was too much for this unsentimental peer of France. He started for his bedroom door. "Very well," said he, as he disappeared, "show them Simon. He is my substitute."

Cousin came in promptly at eight o'clock Sunday morning to give what he called his lecture. At the stroke of eight we used to see the cane, the gray hat, and the blue barracan great-coat coming in sight at the foot of the alley. We awaited him in the library, between the ground-floor and the first story, — two little rooms in which books to the num-

ber of about twenty thousand were heaped upon rough pine planks. This was Georges Cuvier's library, which Cousin had bought for the school the preceding year. There was a long table with benches for readers; and, for the librarian, — who was, if I mistake not, our school-fellow, M. Barroux, — a pine table, with a cane-bottomed chair. Laying his gray hat, his stick, and his great-coat on the table, leaving but scanty room for my translation of Book XII. of the "Metaphysics," he took his seat in Barroux's easy-chair. We placed ourselves on the end of a bench opposite him. There were four of us, — Saisset, Lorquet, Boutron, and I. Saisset, afterward the translator of Spinoza and the author of many fine articles in the "Revue des Deux Mondes" and of several excellent books, died quite young, as titular Professor of Philosophy at the Sorbonne, and a member of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences. Lorquet died a few years ago, as Secretary of the Paris Faculty of Letters. Boutron, who became a distinguished economist, is dead too. All the pupils but me are dead, like their master.

I read my translation of Book XII., each one offering his remarks with entire freedom. Cousin, of course, took the leading part in the debate; but he discussed the subject like one

of us, making much of each one's opinion. We ought to have worshipped him, but there was a certain something that checked our love, — I think it was fear; as for our admiration, it knew no bounds. Sometimes — almost invariably — he bestrode some hobby introduced by chance, and, thus mounted, gave us a succession of varied observations both new and admirable, a series of comparisons, analogies, pictures, anecdotes; never, I believe, has been or will be seen in a man's conversation such an abundance of fine things. The lecture, begun at eight o'clock, was to last an hour and a half; we were still there at one. Then he would suddenly take his hat and say to me, "Come to the Luxembourg." This obliged me, by the way, to dispense with dining. Once at the Luxembourg, he began again for my sole benefit. I think he often forgot whom he addressed, and talked to himself. He was literally indefatigable, having the same control of his faculties and the same strong voice at the end of three or four hours of this monologue as at the beginning. He left me abruptly toward nightfall, and went to dress for a dinner with some of his friends in high life, while I wandered about the streets until it was time to go to supper at the Normal. I reached there at eight o'clock, dying of hunger, having had

nothing to eat all day but a piece of dry bread at seven in the morning.

What did he talk of in our Sunday lecture? Of everything; sometimes even — though but seldom — of philosophy. He liked to talk of his contemporaries, — and it was a great treat to hear him, — of his German friends, of Hegel his favorite, of Schleiermacher, of Kant whom he had not seen; he said less about their philosophy than about their appearance and habits. He also talked of his colleagues in the Academy: Royer-Collard, Guizot, both of whom he respected and admired greatly; Thiers, whom he called his master in politics and a historian as great as Livy; Villemain, whom he very sincerely detested. He spoke also of the romantic school, and made a little fun of them; but Victor Hugo's genius he openly acknowledged. He was at this very time patronizing Hugo's canvass for a place in the Academy, — an unpromising canvass. Dupaty was preferred to Victor Hugo, and Thiers said to Cousin, "I will give Hugo my vote whenever you show me four verses from his pen which are barely mediocre."

Armand Carrel died that year. As I, a very ardent politician of twenty years, was acquainted with him, I deemed myself smitten in the person of my chief, and nothing would do

but that M. Guigniaut, will he nill he, should grant me permission to go to Saint-Mandé for news. I was not quite sure what M. Cousin would say about it the next day. He came straight to me on entering and said: "Well, you were at Saint-Mandé last evening. How is he?" "He is gone," I answered, breaking down. Cousin turned away and shed tears! We were astounded but deeply touched by this. These tears made him in our eyes another and a greater man. After all, he shared man's many-sided nature. He used to say, "A man is complex, a people is complex." His political theory was partly based upon the necessary complexity of races.

He talked much to us about policy; but it was our professional policy, in other words, our future behavior toward His Honor the Prefect, and My Lord Bishop. He hardly talked of anything else during the second semester. "You will go first to see your bishop. No, I mistake; you will go first to see His Honor the Prefect, who is your official superior, and will say, 'Your Honor, I come to assure you;' or you might even say to the prefect, 'M. Cousin has instructed me to assure you that the government can at all times rely—'" It may perhaps be thought that at this point we made a wry face,—especially myself in my

character of great party leader; but we were too much diverted by what we heard, and too certain that the visit in question would never be made, to think of anything but the comedy thus acted out for us four by this high and illustrious personage. And at the bishop's palace! "'My Lord Bishop,' — here he corrected himself with grand gestures, — 'Monseigneur, while maintaining the independence of the reason —' But no, it will be better not to say that; speak only of your respect for the Church. 'I know, Monseigneur, that philosophy will never influence any but the cultured classes, and that religion is necessary for the people. Religion is even necessary to philosophy to open the way for it or to complete its action.'" And then came some very lofty reflections about the two immortal sisters; for it was from Cousin that M. Thiers borrowed this generous wine of which we had the first taste. We were too full of philosophic arrogance to appreciate what was really able in the speech he put into our mouths; we thought only of the bishop's astonishment if we should venture to treat him to a domiciliary lecture on theology, and of Cousin's own consternation at hearing from the bishop that a petty professor of philosophy, fresh from the Normal School, had taken it upon himself to

enact an impertinent farce in the episcopal palace.

He gave us useful instruction about how to employ our time, how to conduct our private studies, and how to teach a class. He recommended a few books: the "Discourse on Method," Bossuet's "Knowledge of God and of One's Self," Fénelon's "Existence of God," Father Buffier. Leibnitz is strong meat for babes. "Don't think of Malebranche; he is a sick man. Among my own books, give precedence to the 'Refutation of Locke,' the 'Preface of 1826,' and the first volume of 'Fragments.'"

M. Damiron, tells, to the glory of M. Cousin, that his pupils at the Normal School were perfectly free not to read his books, that they might discuss them, that he suffered contradiction with a good grace, that it was all, as it were, among friends. This is admirable. Since Damiron says so, it was certainly so in Damiron's time. It was all among friends, I freely admit; it was even all among college chums. Cousin had known Bautain and Damiron on the college benches; he talked with them as familiars. But later on he spoke not only as a superior but as the chief of a school. Sometimes one might have taken him for a comrade; but if, trusting to appearances, we threw off constraint, he instantly showed his

claws. I learn from Damiron that, even in boyhood, Cousin had the habit and instinct of superiority; if a dispute arose, instead of arguing, he inveighed, wounded, crushed. This was a life-long characteristic; it need hardly be said that the Normal School was the special theatre of his galling and lordly temper. Nevertheless, he was thoroughly acquainted with the pupils, with their defects, their merits, their aptitudes. He did not lose sight of them when once they were installed in colleges outside of Paris. He corresponded with all who gave promise of a future. He recommended subjects of study and theses for the doctorate. He sent lists of books. If he saw or suspected that a teacher was on the wrong track, Cousin quickly faced him about. It may be that he was not very fond of the soldiers of his regiment, for after all he was not tender; but he was passionately fond of talent and of philosophy. No one had more power than he to awaken, foster, develop, the love of work. Jouffroy had nothing like the same power of propagandism. Jouffroy's influence was exerted only upon a small body of friends and disciples, whose numbers he did not seek to increase. He was the man for the chosen few, as Cousin was the man for crowds. Jouffroy, when we

went to seek him, was kind, gentle, helpful; Cousin was neither kind nor gentle, but he came himself to seek us; he shook us up; he made us work. In one word, he was a master; and what a master! I think now that we were not so grateful as we should have been. His pettinesses hid from our view his great qualities.

On leaving the Normal School, it is absolutely the rule to go up for the fellowship examination. The future professors of philosophy found M. Cousin there, for he acted as chairman of the examining committee every year for a quarter of a century. He not only put his old Normal School pupils to a new and decisive test, but passed judgment on all the candidates from other schools. Thus all the professors in the royal colleges passed through his hands; for a fellowship was the only door opening to a chair in the royal colleges, — called since 1848 "Lyceums." To be admitted to compete for a fellowship, three years at the Normal School, or two years as resident graduate at a college, were requisite. All candidates, whether graduates of the Normal School or resident graduates of a college, must be masters of arts; [1] the diploma of bachelor of sciences was also required when

[1] Licenciés ès lettres.

Cousin was regnant, but has since been discontinued. There were in the first place two written examinations for sifting the candidates, — one on a philosophical subject, the other on a subject in the history of philosophy. Each examination lasted six hours. The subject was given by the chairman of the committee. The candidates admitted to the oral examinations drew by lot the subject of a thesis; they then drew by lot, among their competitors, for an opponent. The examination took place the next day: the first man maintained a thesis upon the subject assigned; the second proposed objections, to which a reply was made; the discussion lasted an hour; then the lots were drawn anew, for new subjects and new opponents; those who had the day before maintained the theses, on this second day stated objections, and those who had stated objections maintained the theses. These two debates constituted the argumentative examination. A third examination consisted of a lecture, to last an hour, the subject of which, like those of the two debates, was assigned by the chairman and drawn for by the candidates. Thus this competitive examination covered at least five days, not including the days of preparation. When the competitors

were numerous, each examination lasted several days, and the competition for fellowships was prolonged for several weeks. I do not think there is any ordeal more wearing on candidates; it is also very wearing on the judges. Not one of the eight members of the Royal Council neglected his duty of presiding each year at the examination for fellowships in his department. And this was no committee-meeting where one could get up, unbend his mind, be indifferent at certain times to what was going on; one must pay attention to everything, from beginning to end, notice everything, remember everything. I have witnessed sessions beginning at eight in the morning and lasting until six in the evening, with an intermission of one hour for the mid-day meal, and that for weeks at a time.

I have sat many times on the philosophical committee with M. Cousin. He was wonderful. He not only paid attention to everything, but he remembered everything. At the end of a week, at the end of a fortnight, ideas, distinctions, tones, gestures, style, hesitations, were all present to him. The day's work of the members of the committee was not over when the candidates were through; they remained in session to compare notes, to discuss matters. There was renewed discussion, and

often a very long discussion after each series of examinations. The committee often took more than a day for it. The correction of the written compositions might last a month or more when the competitors were very numerous; but generally there were not more than seven or eight of them. The reader will readily believe that M. Cousin was impatient of contradiction; yet he was obliged to reckon with such colleagues as Jouffroy, Damiron, Frederic Cuvier, and even Cardaillac, whose substitute he had been at the Bourbon College, and who remained faithful to M. La Romiguière. Though Cousin knew how to bend and flatter, he knew not how to yield; and it was but seldom that he bent and flattered. He delighted, nay, exulted in attack. He also had recourse to raillery, of which he was a master. From any dispute with him one came out wounded; for the alternative was either utterly to break with him or to obey. On the whole, his will was sovereign in the fellowship committee as well as in the Normal School.

I have said that he remembered everything while the competitive examination lasted. He remembered everything twenty, yes, thirty years after. His memory was implacable. This was one reason why he was so much to be

dreaded. He often disregarded, he sometimes pardoned, he never forgot, either an excellence or a defect, either an offence or a merit.

After having surmounted this terrible barrier of the fellowship examination, we remained under his control as professors. He could keep us at Paris or send us to the end of the world; make one of us full professor, and condemn another to endless service as a substitute,—that is, to poverty. He sometimes played such tricks, not out of any ill-will, but because he liked to struggle and to witness struggles. When I began to supply his place at the Sorbonne in 1839, he fixed my salary at one thousand francs a year, that is, eighty-three francs[1] a month. He knew, beyond a doubt, that I had nothing else in the world, and this circumstance delighted him. "Simon will pull through," said he. I lived up six flights, in an attic looking on the square before the Sorbonne. He said to my classmates as they passed across the square with him, begging for promotion: "Just look at Simon; he is up there in his garret with no fire, and never knows to-day whether he will have any dinner to-morrow."

[1] About sixteen dollars. To appreciate this, one must bear in mind the fact that the Sorbonne is the French Oxford, and that Simon was at that time one of the most accomplished young men in France.—Tr.

He knew the name and the record of each of his soldiers. The Normal School graduates had been for three years under his direct and efficient oversight. He had examined most of the others for the master's degree, and had made a study of them at the competition for fellowships, — and of some unlucky wights for several years in succession. In the case of the teachers in communal colleges, — then very absurdly called "regents," but now "professors," — since they were neither masters of arts nor fellows, he was compelled to trust more to the reports of their rectors and inspectors. If one of these teachers published a review, an edition, an article of any moment, and especially if he published a book, Cousin at once read it, or at least, to use his expression, scented it afar. If the performance was worthless, the man was lost; if there was any trace of talent in it, Cousin became at once his tyrant and his protector. From that time such a person knew no rest until he had shown all that was in him, and had, in return, been provided with a position worthy of his talent. In one way or another there was not a teacher in a royal or communal college — I mean among the teachers of philosophy — whom Cousin did not know by heart. His memory rendered notes superfluous. As soon as a teacher's

name was spoken, he could tell the man's residence, history, degrees (with the date of his examinations), his good points, his defects, and, if a writer, the list of his books or pamphlets; and all was given with an accuracy of memory and a sureness of judgment that could not be surpassed.

It was then the habit of the professors of philosophy (and I speak of no others) to come to Paris every year to pass a portion of their vacation. The young and ambitious came at Easter also, that they might be seen the oftener. The first thing on arriving was to call upon Cousin. The court of the Sorbonne swarmed with philosophers. One was sure of being received; one was not sure of being well received. If no thesis or paper had been worked up, if one's teaching had been negligently done, or if one had got into some scrape, — a very rare occurrence, — one was greeted with unparalleled severity. He uttered cutting remarks, as when he said of a man of his rank, but not of his century (Cousin was of the seventeenth century, the other of the twentieth), "I knew him when he was honest and commonplace;" and of another, "He is one of those to whom God has said, 'Thou shalt never see light'!"[1] Take as another instance this

[1] Psalm xlix. 19.

epitaph which he proposed for one of his best friends: "Here lies so and so, who was — according to Plato's definition — a dog, licking the hands of his master, and biting the legs of all household enemies." I remember what happened to one of my schoolmates, a very distinguished man, titular professor in a provincial faculty. Cousin was then Minister. It was at one of his evening receptions; his drawing-room was full of great people, — members of the Institute, peers of France, deputies, and likewise professors, it being then the Easter vacation. My schoolmate entered, eager and expectant, in his great-coat, — I fancy I see him, — in a dusty great-coat dangling to his heels, and with a thick volume under his arm, upon which he built his hopes of success and fame. He walked straight up to Cousin, elbowing everybody aside, and without stopping to think that he was interrupting a conversation, said in his most sonorous voice: "Your Excellency, here is *my book*. You have the first copy of it. I apply to you for the chair of ——, which is vacant." All were silent in order to hear and see this model pedant. "Sir," Cousin replied, speaking louder than he, "hand your book to one of the ushers in my antechamber. As for yourself, I advise you to think a little more of your intellectual

and moral advancement, and much less of your material advancement." These ratings were only occasional, because the regiment kept well in line; but none felt secure from them, and all were in marching order.

Academic canvasses were grand affairs for him. He was a power in the French Academy and in the Academy of Moral Sciences. Besides the influence due to his great philosophical and literary merit, he had the influence of his eloquence. Every election, in either Academy, was preceded by a serious and elaborate discussion of the qualifications of candidates. In this, Cousin seldom failed to take a leading part; and of course, before such a select audience, he exhausted every resource. It was a grand thing to have him for a champion; to have him for an assailant was to be lost. Of all the men of his time, he was the greatest master of scorn. I note in passing that his preponderance in the Institute was another means of controlling his regiment; for there was not an officer in it who did not hope to become a member of the Academy, nor a subaltern who did not long for at least an Academic prize. If he favored one's candidacy, no friend and protector could be more zealous and powerful; if he repulsed one, he coupled with the repulse all the annoyances that he could in-

vent. He seldom failed, for instance, to make you swallow the eulogy of your rival. He was impertinent to Michelet, who detested him and did not hide it, and who gave him as good as he sent. Chance made me a witness of this passage at arms. Each had a foeman worthy of his steel. When M. Ancelot called to ask Cousin's vote for the French Academy, the gentleman's books were sent along ahead of him. The parcel, all tied up, lay on the table when M. Ancelot came in. "You did not compose all that, did you?" asked M. Cousin. "Have you not put in Madame Ancelot's works, too?" "I own," said the other, "that I thought—" "It was the best thing you could do," M. Cousin replied. "I shall not vote for the family," said he to me as soon as M. Ancelot had gone. "The wife is a ridiculous blue-stocking, and the husband is a fool." It was not thus that he treated Jouffroy, who gave him no chance; he confided to me his opinion on this subject. "I don't know what to do about the French Academy," he said to me. "I have no one in view." "Take Jouffroy." "What! poor Jouffroy," he retorted, with his lordly gestures; "if he heard you he would blush to the roots of his hair!"

I could cite many other instances. Here is my own. I was a candidate for the Academy

of Moral and Political Sciences, and my canvass was progressing very well, when my former teacher, M. Garnier, took it into his head to present himself as my competitor. I should never have entered the field against him, but I had not the grace to withdraw in his favor. The situation was very distressing to me. During the two months it lasted, I never once went to see M. Cousin that I was not treated to a eulogy of my competitor; he discovered new merits in him every day, for my express benefit; and when he had tortured me well with M. Garnier's praises, he began to discuss my poor books. It was of no use to tell him that I myself thought them of no value, and only asked that they might be forgotten; he returned to the attack every day, and each time with redoubled energy. Does the reader imagine that in conclusion he advised me to withdraw? Quite the contrary. He enumerated to me the brave candidates who had been four times beaten before getting into the sanctuary. There was even one colleague who had presented himself six times. And he actually wound up by remarking that perseverance was also a merit!

Nowhere did M. Cousin appear more at home than at the examinations for the doctorate. They were then little frequented. Peo-

ple have learned the way to them, since M. Caro, M. Janet, and their colleagues began to vie at these examinations in erudition and in dialectics. But at one and the same session we could then hear M. La Romiguière, M. Damiron, M. Jouffroy, M. Cousin. The audience, which never numbered a score, was composed of future candidates and friends of the candidates. M. La Romiguière was mild and polite, but obstinate; and as he spoke the language of another school, we did not always understand him. He was very old when I knew him (seventy-eight years of age in 1834); and since Cousin incited us to compose theses on the philosophers of ancient Greece, this aged scholar, whose only knowledge of Plato's dialogues was derived from Father Grou's translation, was quite beyond his depth. The sole anxiety of Damiron, the poor dear master, with his wonted kindness and modesty, was to display the candidate's ability. When Jouffroy was confronted with an able candidate and a subject in pyschology or morals that suited his taste, he argued and spoke at length, with a precision, a clearness, an air of firm and calm authority, equalled by none. He was sometimes pitiless. I once heard him say to a candidate who had obliged him to go over a demonstra-

tion a second time, "Either you understand this or do not understand it; but if you do not understand it, I am sorry for you." The candidate was so put out by this, that after a few efforts to reply to the next examiner he found himself unable to collect his wits, and withdrew. Jouffroy did not hesitate to avow his own ignorance when the subject was not familiar to him. When I sustained my thesis he said to me, "I have come to vote for you, after applauding you, but I am not competent to speak of the Alexandrian school."

Cousin believed himself competent to speak of all possible subjects, and I really think he was right. There was not a subject in the world on which he could not improvise a brilliant talk. Moreover, he knew a great many things about a great many different subjects, because his mind was always alert, and because nothing once learned ever escaped him. If he was present, we knew that he would give a talk, and a long one, — so long sometimes that he left no chance for others. This mattered little to him, for his politeness was not over-refined. And besides, as he had come thither for himself and himself alone, the audience had also come for him alone. He was a good logician, but he was especially formidable because he had no consideration,

no scruples. The candidate, having often spent a year or two delving in his subject, felt confident, even before Jouffroy, in the strength of his preparation; but as soon as Cousin began to speak, one felt at his mercy. He wished either to show off the candidate or to make him fail, — that was at once evident, and we knew the event would be as he had decided. He did not, like Jouffroy, give a lecture, but a conversation in his own peculiar style; that is, in a series of monologues.

I have already said that in conversation he was unrivalled; felicitous expressions, new ideas, comparisons, anecdotes, came to his mind in crowds, and he disposed them in an incomparably free and masterly way. He passed from pleasantry to emotion, and from the greatest things to minutiæ, with such ease that it all seemed a matter of course. We could not be bored, because the outlook changed every minute; nor vexed, because there was always profit in listening to him. During the operation the hearer's personality was set at nought, but the result was wonderfully tonic. He laid his spell upon you like an enchanter; and the magic flowed, not from his intellect alone, for his body, which was thoroughly under control, was the peer of his mind. His voice had every tone at command,

his eye was laughing or terrible, his mouth eloquent, his gestures slightly exaggerated, yet without offending against taste; for he belonged to the school and the company of Plato, and never, even in his boldest fantasies, lost sight of the golden mean. He had one trait that I have never met with in any other talker. Most conversers need some kind of an audience: Sainte-Beuve's vein flowed only among witty men and pretty women, while Saint-Marc Girardin — though I scarcely dare to say so — was most at ease among pedants; Villemain needed a professor's chair or a fashionable gathering; Cousin was ready anywhere, on any subject, and with any listener. It mattered little to him who his interlocutor was. Whether there was a whole roomful or but one person present, and whether this person was a wit or a fool, if Cousin was in an ingenious and talkative humor, he pursued his point. His actual audience, that is, the man seated there beside him wondering that Cousin should be willing to take so much trouble for his sake, would have been surprised at the sudden discovery that Cousin had forgotten all about him, or regarded him as an utter imbecile.

I think the eight months of his ministry were not the happiest of his life. He was glad

to put in practice certain ideas, the ripe fruit of long reflection; glad to make some good creations, of which I shall speak presently; proud, too, of being first, of being master, of an opportunity to show off, — for he had such weaknesses, — proud to have precedence at the court and in society, and no longer to be one notch below Villemain; for the great and the little, like the good and the bad, were intimately blended in Cousin. He had long desired this office, and he delighted even in its embellishments. One evening in the latter part of February, 1840, as he was walking with me on Gabriel Avenue, he said, pointing to the beautiful gardens bordering one side of the avenue, "To-morrow, perhaps, I shall have gardens like those." "Why," I responded, "have you made a fortune?" "Better than that; I am going to be a minister. We have an appointment to-night with M. Thiers. He urges me, he insists; I cannot refuse. One must go with one's friends!" And thereupon he began talking of his "Plato" "still unfinished." But I said to myself that if his Plato was the only difficulty, the Cabinet was complete. The next day he set out on foot for Grenelle Street, whither his servant Louis had sent by a porter a trunk containing a few personal effects. So easy was his installation!

These pettinesses may be related without detracting from his greatness, for none of these things would have checked him one minute if his honor had bidden him withdraw. He showed this plainly; it was he who said to the king, at the beginning of the Egyptian imbroglio, "Dismiss us!" I fancy that, while enjoying all his dignities, he was cramped and embarrassed by them. On beginning a familiar talk with an old acquaintance, he would suddenly stop for fear of compromising his dignity. When he took a pen to sign papers, he would be seized by a sudden desire to write a page on Jacqueline Pascal. Once he occupied his old chair at the Sorbonne, but only to preside at the award of the prizes in the General Competition, and to read a written discourse. What a sad contrast with the past!

He displayed great activity during his ministry, and yet made no great revolutions. He had been too intimately associated with the administration of his predecessors to need to repair the house; he was like an old tenant coming into possession of the property. He found everything where he himself had put it.

It must not be supposed that it was only in what relates to philosophy that the Minister found his way made smooth by the Councillor.

To think so would be to mistake our man; for it was Cousin's habit to interfere in everything. He would have permitted no one to meddle with his regiment, but he himself liked to meddle with other people's regiments. Were I to be informed that he had a battle with M. Thénard about chemistry, I should not be surprised. Moreover, he was extremely well-versed in certain matters foreign to his specialty.

Although he had been director of the philosophical faculty, he was far from being a stranger to primary instruction, — a department which, since M. Guizot's time, had been one of the most important. He had helped to draw up the law of 1833, and claimed its paternity, which must, however, be attributed to M. Guizot. Cousin wrote the law according to M. Guizot's suggestions and subject to his orders. It is none the less true that Cousin wrote it, and that even the statement of reasons is by his hand. He had long had competent knowledge of the matter, having been intrusted with various educational missions to Germany and Holland, which gave rise to reports very full of facts and ideas. Accordingly he had no changes to make in the law of 1833. One of his plans was to develop the higher primary schools. If time had not failed him, he would have given these

schools very great importance; for he rightly thought that while primary schools train the workmen, while colleges train the learned and literary classes, there must be intermediate schools, or higher primary schools, to train foremen, accountants, small employers. It was much the same thought that later on caused the creation of special secondary instruction; only, in 1840, the industries not being developed as in our day, the industrial chiefs demanded less, and had fewer intellectual needs, so that the higher primary schools sufficed them.

Cousin thought there were three disadvantages in replacing these schools by poor colleges: that of failing to give the lower middle classes the instruction they need; that of giving incapable persons instruction which they do not comprehend, inflating them with pride, and supplying them with no resources; lastly, that of lowering the standard of literary instruction in our colleges, — a standard that could evidently be raised, were such instruction reserved for a chosen few. To give the masses that instruction only which is indispensable, but to give it plentifully to the whole people; to give the middle classes positive, practical instruction, teaching only useful things; on the other hand, to push intellectual

culture as far as possible in the schools reserved for the upper classes and for choice spirits, — such is the general plan that gives consistency to the orders, decisions, circulars, programmes, emanating from him.

The higher grades of instruction, the faculties, the College of France, the great schools, called especially for his efforts. He hastened to create in connection with the literary and scientific faculties a corps of fellows, who were to serve as assistants and substitutes to the full professors. This was the introduction into France of the German system of *Privatdocenten*. From this corps of fellows has been evolved the present corps of lecturers [*maîtres de conférence*], with the difference that they are now appointed directly, whereas Cousin had them qualify by competitive examination, thus assimilating the management of the literary and scientific faculties to that of the faculties of law and medicine.

One of his great projects was to have university towns, after the manner of Germany, where Jena, Göttingen, Heidelberg, and so many other towns, are rivals in learning and fame. So likewise in France, he wished to multiply centres of intellectual activity, to create a collection of faculties in the chief towns of the old French provinces. An isolated literary fac-

ulty has not even an audience; add besides a law school and a medical school, and the whole will flourish. When he formed this project, so excellent in itself, he forgot that if Rennes and Lyons possess the necessary requisites to become great centres of intellectual effort like Jena or Göttingen, yet our great towns have to submit to the overwhelming preponderance of Paris. Germany was then divided into petty states, and even Berlin, compared with Paris, was but a small town.

To Cousin belongs the initiative in the reform of higher education. Time failed him, not ideas. He was still full of plans when he left office, and yet he had not ceased to toil and to produce. Other ministries of longer duration have done more; not one has done so much in a time so limited. For all his acts he eagerly courted publicity. Damiron said to him, "You make too much noise." Cousin looked him straight in the eye without replying, and began his racket again. He kept up the noise about his ministry even after his fall, since he took upon himself to write the history of the great things he had done.

He had been obliged after much hesitation to name a successor in his regiment,—that is, to appoint a Royal Councillor who should have charge of philosophical instruction. He chose

Jouffroy, as he could not help doing; he had not thought for a moment of any other choice. Jouffroy was not a lieutenant-colonel; he was fairly and squarely a colonel, so that Cousin had lost by his promotion the power he prized most. In what condition would he find his regiment on retiring from the ministry; and the Normal School; and his library, another sharer in his affections? I am sure that when he passed through the Rue du Bac in his carriage on his way to dine with the king, he sometimes regretted the evening walks we had been wont to take together through these same streets and the Rue Saint-Jacques; for we used to take what we called a turn around the square, each of us — peer of France and pedagogue — having in his pocket two sous' worth of roasted chestnuts which we munched in the face of the passers-by, who little thought they were elbow to elbow with one of the greatest writers of the land.

At last he fell. The dream had lasted but eight months. It was a hard fall, especially at first, because all was now lost, — both his empire and his regiment. He declared that he was reduced to live by shifts. He had taken back from me, of course, the salary of full professor which I had enjoyed for a whole trimester; but the Councillor's place, which Jouffroy

did not offer to return to him, was worth twelve thousand francs a year. The loss of this twelve thousand francs embarrassed him. Every evening he took me into his confidence, — and for such grievances I was a strangely chosen confidant. His laments were so long and loud that they even reached the king's ears. The king liked him, and did not think it right that one of his former ministers should be pinched for money. He spoke of it to M. de Rothschild, and the latter at once offered Cousin a place on a railway board. But let Cousin's opponents, wont to declaim against his avarice, consider his course: he unhesitatingly refused. "It is no place for a member of the Academy," he said. Nothing could indemnify him for that place in the Royal Council. Its emoluments were a great attraction, its authority a far greater one. Though he spoke to me with sadness of his library, to which he could no longer devote six thousand francs every year, yet he spoke much more of the innovations introduced into his regiment. To do him justice, the twelve thousand francs were as nothing compared with these innovations, which to him were heart-breaking. "Jouffroy is a worthy man, he is my friend. A great mind if you will, even a philosopher; a successor to Dugald Stewart, a shade narrower than his master. But this last

circular! . . . " To cap the climax, the regiment countenanced it all, turned its back on the Eleatics and the Alexandrian school, devoted itself wholly to psychology. "What would Schleiermacher say?"

Early in 1842 Jouffroy died. Cousin could re-enter the Royal Council. Upon his return everything and everybody were so fresh in his mind that it seemed to him he had sat in the Council the day before. He was persuaded that to the very heart of Germany there would be joy at his return. In France — that is, in French colleges — sentiments were divided. Jouffroy had almost as many friends, and he had much fewer enemies, — or rather he had none. On the whole, there ought to have been no hesitation between the master and his disciple. Jouffroy had neither the unwearied activity, nor the alertness of wit, nor the breadth of view, nor the varied knowledge, nor the boundless devotion to his work and his mission, which made Cousin an incomparable director. I thought sometimes that he should have been born in the fifteenth century, to be Abbot-General of Cîteaux or Cluny. Perhaps he might have stirred up the Church, though I do not think so; but he would surely have adorned it by his own labors and by those of his disciples. Certain it is that the University, and uni-

versity instruction in philosophy, could desire no more skilful defender, no master more capable and devoted; I do not say more gentle.

He was much complained of, as the all-powerful always are. He was severe with others because he was severe with himself. His severities were often a proof of esteem. Had he not set some store by me, he would not have exposed me to die of hunger. This is what I sometimes think when I reproach myself with not being so grateful to him as I ought to have been. He was beset by two desires: to be just, and to give talent an opportunity to display itself. Though I call up all the acts of his administration, I find not one to disprove his love of justice and his devotion to rising talent. He sometimes turned against his creatures when their talents had been trained and had grown brilliant. I am quite sure that before he became afraid of Jouffroy, Cousin loved him tenderly, and even when jealous of him, loved him still. Cousin loved in his own way, which was neither very sentimental nor very deep. An appointment to make in some obscure college, when there were several candidates whose merits were evenly balanced, was to him a great affair. In the case of an important post, a chair in a great royal college, — above all if the chair was at Paris, — he thought

of nothing else, and would allow the matter to worry and wear upon him. His decision was always based on the best of reasons. His choice once made, he was sorry for the rejected candidate, but only on condition that the victim kept out of his sight; for if the unhappy man ventured to present himself, Cousin would bully and terrify him. One would have said that some evil genius had condemned Cousin to make himself misunderstood.

Yet he must have been fitted to please, for he satisfied himself. Great men are said never to be satisfied with what they have done. If this be true, it is true of petty great men, — great men of the second class. I have always seen truly great men contented with themselves. I think this is the sentiment Michelet speaks of, when he says that great men have joy. Cousin had the joy of knowing his own worth; he felt himself necessary. One day, a year or two before 1848, I met Pierre Leroux, who began a tirade against the eclectics. "However," he said to me, "the whole structure will fall with Cousin. When Cousin disappears, your whole gang of professors and your whole school will disappear with him." I was boiling over with rage after this conversation, for I did not think we were of so little account. I repeated the conversation

to Cousin as he was breakfasting on bread and honey. "Leroux is right," he calmly replied, eating away at the slice he had spread. I beg the reader to believe that he was not always so discouraging.

He admired three things in his time: the Charter,[1] whose place in his thoughts was afterward taken by the July Monarchy; the philosophy of Schelling and Hegel, which he thought that he had brought to perfection; and the Royal Council, of which his department was the best conducted and the best disciplined. Of course I mean the old, the true, the great Royal Council, as it was under Guizot, Villemain, and Cousin, — in a word, the Council of Eight. M. de Salvandy, under the pretext of making it greater, disgraced it by the introduction of incompetent persons. At least, such was the opinion of Cousin, who was exasperated by this pretended reform. It seemed to him that M. de Salvandy had touched the sacred ark. When M. Duruy was appointed minister of public instruction, it occurred to him to visit two or three of the great university men of Paris. He did not omit to go and see Cousin at the Sorbonne. "What would you lay most stress upon," said Duruy after a long conversation,

[1] *La Charte constitutionelle*, granted by Louis XVIII. in 1814. — Tr.

"if you were in my place?" Cousin rested his chin on his hand and reflected deeply for several minutes. Then, suddenly starting from his reverie, he answered impressively, "I should restore the Council of Eight."

The results obtained by Cousin during his reign of more than twenty years were considerable. In the first place he trained a body of professors of distinction, learning, circumspection, who opened minds without disturbing them, and whose teaching, coming at the close of the whole course of literary studies, gave it light and completeness. To thoroughly appreciate the service thus rendered to philosophy and to culture, it is necessary to know what philosophical instruction was from 1810, the date of its reinstatement in the University, up to 1831, when M. Cousin took office. M. Royer-Collard had arranged things somewhat, but the amount of it was that logic was taught in Latin, from an anonymous collection called "The Lyons Philosophy;" some declamations were delivered about God and the destiny of the soul; some pages were read from Descartes or Fénelon or La Romiguière. Except for the logic, which was barbarous, all this was but a rather advanced course in rhetoric, wherein French appeared as a lowly handmaid behind Latin, the reigning tongue.

M. Cousin put in fellows everywhere, restored French to its place, imposed a uniform programme and had it adopted even in the humblest colleges. M. Janet remarks that this programme prescribes the questions and does not prescribe their solutions. This is true, and was necessary to secure the acceptance of the programme. Moreover, since the same programme served for the classes and for the baccalaureate, there could be no such thing as insisting in the name of the state upon philosophic orthodoxy in the examinations. Thus no system was imposed, the sole understanding being that professors should everywhere teach the existence of God, his providence, the spirituality and immortality of the soul, free will, duty. If a professor had hesitated about one of these points, he would at once have felt M. Cousin's hand upon him. Nor do I blame M. Cousin for this. Neutrality of instruction had not yet been invented; everybody believed in those days — and, thank Heaven! I still continue to believe — that there is no difference between neutral teaching and no teaching at all.

Another point gained by M. Cousin was that every professor should take up a task of his own, — the study of a question in psychology or metaphysics, the translation or annotation of an ancient philosopher, the rescue from

oblivion of a slighted work or doctrine. A few old men were allowed to end their careers in forgetfulness; but all the young University men were at work. The Academies had crowns only for them. Were I composing a eulogy on M. Cousin instead of painting his portrait, I should place beside his own works the list of those he incited others to make, and the two lists would reflect equal glory upon him; for he deemed it not enough to give his professors a taste for work, he was always ready to point out sources, to throw out ideas, even to read manuscripts and show how they must be recast in order to fit them for publication. He was, for France, a sort of universal professor.

M. Janet asserts that he was the head of a school, and that at the same time he left the professors of the University free in their instruction. I dispute both assertions. He had few disciples, and even they dissented from him in many respects. His own system was neither conceived with enough power, nor adhered to with enough perseverance, to found a school. With seeming inconsistency he regarded all the professors of philosophy as called to preach in his name. Why did he give a course in the third year at the Normal School? In order to fill the young teachers with his spirit. He indicated very clearly what books of his they

were to take as the basis of their instruction. He obtained information from the inspectors-general, and when a recalcitrant or wavering professor came to Paris, he was received and treated according to his deserts.

M. Damiron, like M. Janet, extols the great freedom which M. Cousin vouchsafed his pupils. I really think that Damiron and his friends, being the pupils at the Normal School of their former schoolmate, who was teaching philosophy before he had a philosophy to teach, were not subjected to a very strict discipline. It was different a few years later. We were free only in name. We were free to break our necks.

Let M. Janet inquire of our two colleagues, Messrs. Waddington and Hatzfeld. When the February Revolution came to put an end to Cousin's sway, they were occupied in making under his direction an Elementary Handbook of Philosophy, which contained nothing but passages from different books of his, well dovetailed together so as to constitute a regular, complete, and irreproachable system. This handbook was to be officially authorized and officiously imposed. Philosophy would then have its catechism; it already had its bishop.

How could professors be free under a chief who had been their master at the Normal

School, and their judge at the fellowship examination, who was their hope for the Academy, who did not take his eyes off them for an instant, who was informed of all they said, who read all they wrote, who was invested with the most absolute control over their whole career? As for himself, how could he be liberal in the position in which he was placed? He wished to be liberal. He was one of those liberals who say, "I am philosophy!" Never could Hegel, Leibnitz, or Descartes have dreamed of such despotic authority. France had intrusted philosophical instruction to his hands, and I can bear witness that these hands were as firm as they were powerful.

There remained two professors at Paris devoted to La Romiguière's doctrine, — Messrs. Valette and Safary. It was well for them that they were full professors and had no ambition either in the direction of the University or in that of the Academy. When M. Thiers brought in the law with reference to secondary instruction, M. Safary ran to him to complain of M. Cousin's despotism. Said M. Thiers to me: "I berated him!" Oddly enough when M. Thiers took to writing philosophy, he came nearer to La Romiguière — and hence to Safary — than he did to Cousin. As for Valette, he was urged to accept a substitute. "He will

supply your place for twelve hundred francs." It was a very tempting proposal, but Valette held out. What was done about it? The would-be substitute was appointed to lecture to the class. The person selected was a young fellow fresh from the Normal School, of kindly character and fluent speech. M. Octave Feuillet, who was then a student in philosophy at the College of Louis the Great, may remember him. The pupils were given to understand that if they would have prizes at the General Competition, and white balls for the baccalaureate, they must hearken to the assistant and turn a deaf ear to the professor.

This control was very strict; the professors were humiliated by it. They were especially distressed by the narrow limits to which their teaching was confined. Cousin wished the University to be irreproachable, because he saw that it was very severely attacked. The professors did not see the danger as clearly as he did, and left to him the responsibility of averting it. But at this point Cousin's purely administrative work terminates. We are trenching upon his political work, which must be studied separately.

CHAPTER IV.

HIS BATTLES.

THE philosopher who seeks truth in the retirement of his study has a task involving little solicitude. He advances toward his goal by whatever path seems most direct, and, having discovered truth, he makes it known unreservedly, with no care but to be exact in research and clear in statement.

In the times of state religions and absolute states, philosophers were beset by a different anxiety; for by speaking the truth they might put liberty and life at stake. The boldest braved all and died like heroes. Others endeavored to mislead the enemy by modifying or hiding their real thoughts, and, in order to be free to say at least something, kept something back. Others, again, sought through the world for a land where a man was free to be in the right. Such was the course of Descartes, although he was not wanting in courage.

The teaching of philosophy in educational institutions inevitably raises, besides philosoph-

ical problems, a problem in politics. Let us first set aside as ignoble the thought of teaching what one does not believe, or of teaching what one doubts as certain. It is plain that in order to give instruction which includes morality and in all its parts declares for morality, one must have an upright heart and a firm mind; but there is still room to inquire whether every doctrine is fit to teach children.

Do I, the father, when I wish to have my son taught philosophy, mean to say that he shall be taught a materialistic or a spiritualistic philosophy as the professor pleases; that it matters little to me whether he is taught to believe in God or not to believe in Him, whether he is made a Christian or an enemy to Christianity? It is manifest that if I am thus indifferent to the solution of questions, I must prefer that there be no questions raised. The philosophy I desire for my son is not any philosophy whatever; it is a certain definite philosophy. At Paris, where there are several colleges, I can make my choice, after finding out what the master teaches. But there may be cases where the choice is limited to these two alternatives: either no teaching, or wrong teaching. The choice of a man of sense cannot be doubtful; he will answer, "No teaching."

So much for the father. But what will the

state do, that furnishes the instruction? Shall we affirm in the case of the state what we deny in the case of the father, and say that the state desires philosophical instruction, no matter what the philosophy taught? If the state is so indifferent as this, what right has it to interfere with giving and regulating instruction? There has been invented of late, out of respect for atheists, a sort of primary training which is neutral, that is to say, null,— in other words, a primary training that includes not one philosophical notion; for let philosophy enter under any form whatever, then farewell neutrality, since philosophy is, by definition, a body of doctrine. The state, then, must teach something, if it teaches philosophy; and what, pray, shall it teach? Shall its instruction be materialistic or spiritualistic; atheistic or deistic? Shall it take a young teacher of good moral character, provided with university degrees, and say to him, "Here is a thousand dollars, teach what you please"? A pretty situation that of the father who either never knew, or does not now know, a word of philosophy, if obliged to make an inquiry into the doctrines of the teacher before intrusting his son to him, to follow the teaching afterward to find out whether it is modified in any respect, and to withdraw his son abruptly if the professor be replaced in the

course of the year by a man of different opinions; and no less odd would be the situation of a state displaying among its wares doctrines from every source, and offering them to the public without inspection, at the risk of selling nothing but poison!

In the time of Hobbes, which is a very remote time, and in the time of Le Pelletier, Saint-Fargeau, and Robespierre, which is a time nearer to our own, the state entirely took the place of the father. Its more than enormous pretension was to bring up the children according to the will of the state, and not according to the will of their fathers. The state, I say; but what kind of a state? A state with doctrines. These doctrines, whatever they were, were the cloak of despotism; for rulers had not at that time conceived the idea of oppression in the name of nothing. The neutral school imposed by the state is an invention of the nineteenth century, and will be its glory.

When M. Cousin was at college, the question was summarily disposed of. The Imperial University, by virtue of its constitution, took as the basis of its instruction the Catholic religion, which amounts to saying that the Catholic religion was the state religion for the University. When Cousin began to teach in the Sorbonne, France was under the Restoration; there was,

then, a state religion not only for the University but for the nation. The state, having a religion, imposed it upon its teachers, who imposed it upon their pupils. There was no room for freedom. There were no schools but state schools. Private instruction existed only by state authorization, and under state surveillance, — or rather under state direction. Even in philosophy there was no private instruction; it must either go unlearned, or be learned in a state institution. The state alone presided over the examinations that opened the door to every career, and those only could come up for examination who had studied philosophy at state colleges. There was no room, no refuge for freedom, — I was about to say for philosophy, since freedom and philosophy are not to be put asunder. Moreover, freedom was won for the state before being won for the schools. The Revolution of 1830 abolished the state religion everywhere else, and left it in force in the University, with only this difference, — no slight one, it is true, — that the University was governed by M. Cousin instead of being governed by bishops.

M. Cousin fully admitted the despotism so transformed. This intellectual kingship pleased him, because it had devolved upon a philosopher. It was in his eyes the reign

of philosophy, — an utter mistake, for it was but the reign of M. Cousin! Philosophy was still forbidden, since freedom was still under the ban. "I recognize freedom of thought," said M. Cousin, "and I demand it; but I do not recognize freedom of instruction." "The state is the teacher," said he, in the tone in which M. Bonald said at the same epoch, "The Church is the teacher." Cousin's great mind confounded the right to teach Latin — a right open to discussion — with the right to teach a doctrine. "Freedom of thought is not at stake," said he. What, O philosopher, signifies freedom of thought without freedom of speech?

For his own part, under the Restoration he did not hesitate to make free with the state religion. But M. Cousin was not a college professor, but a professor at the University, a professor at Paris, a great professor and a great man; moreover, he did not think himself as bold as he was.

He rightly thought that there was no parity between the instruction of the faculties, addressed to philosophers, and that of the colleges, addressed to children. The distinction was all the more legitimate because in his time, and with his full assent when he was in power, the philosophical courses in the colleges were obligatory. The University was

the only teacher of philosophy, and forced all the would-be bachelors to study philosophy in its schools. Could it, in such conditions, permit its professors to teach whatever pleased their fancy? And would the heads of families — who, though they had not free choice of instruction, were at least free to refuse the taxes and to vote down the Budget — give their money for a nondescript instruction, or for instruction opposed to their wishes and beliefs? Would they yield their confidence to a government that should wound them in the most sensitive spot, by perverting and unsettling the minds and consciences of their children?

To-day we have free choice of instruction, and consequently the problem no longer cries out so loudly and peremptorily for solution as in M. Cousin's time. But if the state does not forbid private schools, it yet renders their existence difficult, almost impossible. Though the state is not the only teacher, it is almost the only one. It teaches with the nation's money, and by the nation's authority. Whenever the state sets forth a doctrine, it must manage not to offend any church, and especially not to offend the Catholic Church, since Catholicism is the religion of the immense majority of the fathers, and of all the mothers.

But what is philosophy when thus adjusted to the requirements of any religion whatever? It is no longer philosophy. Ask Cousin himself whether philosophy can bear the yoke of faith! On this point he was always unyielding. Philosophy must be free, or it ceases to exist. It is a mockery to talk to us in the nineteenth century of a "handmaid of theology." Inquisitorial cant! This is the land of Descartes, and we hold as true all that is proved true by the light of reason.

How can this independence and this dependence be harmonized? On the one hand is the right to think and say anything; on the other, the prohibition to attack or oppose certain doctrines. Cousin hit upon a compromise in which I think he had too much confidence. Philosophy can yield none of its freedom, and the Church none of her dogmas. If I were master, I should escape the dilemma by transferring philosophy properly so called to the University faculties, and by limiting the philosophy of the colleges to the thorough study of methods and the reading of some noble work, such as the "Phædo" for antiquity, and Descartes' "Discourse on Method" for modern times. Cousin prefers to insist that philosophy and religion have not absolutely the same aim, and are not addressed to the same minds.

The aim differs less than he imagines; and the Church, though it speaks only to little minds, does not consent to abandon great minds to the philosophers. Cousin insists also upon the orthodoxy of his doctrine; but the Church replies that the orthodoxy of the master does not guarantee the orthodoxy of his disciples, nor the orthodoxy of to-day the orthodoxy of to-morrow. Moreover, the Church questions his alleged orthodoxy, not without reason; in fact, when she tells all she thinks, the Church shows that it is not so much this or the other doctrine that she questions, as the right freely to choose a doctrine, — that is, the right to be a philosopher. It is curious to hear Cousin say to the philosophers, "You are not free, — yet rejoice, for you have no master but me, and I am a philosopher;" and then to see him turn to the Church and say, "I claim for myself and for all philosophers absolute independence, — yet be not anxious either as to the present or the future, for my philosophy is orthodox."

He assures us that only false philosophy and false religion are at loggerheads. This is the language of a man who has become chief of police in the philosopher's world. The inquisitor, who has become chief of police in the theological world, and the true philosopher,

who will neither submit to police control nor exercise it, would say quite the contrary.

After 1830 Cousin strove to be orthodox, and strove with less success to prove that he had always been orthodox. He kept a watch over the professors in his department, to compel them to be orthodox. The professors complained, of course; the Church complained too. This alleged orthodoxy was not admitted; but suppose the Church had admitted it! The fact that he was a philosopher was enough to make him an object of suspicion.

Before 1830, Romanism being the state religion, the Church could attack philosophy in its principle. After 1830, obliged to make a feint of yielding this point, the Church shifted her ground of attack to pantheism. Pantheism was found in Cousin's lectures and in his Preface of 1826. His disavowal was not listened to. What the master had said, the Church attributed to all the philosophers. The clergy thereupon renewed all their former declamations against pantheism, and repeated everywhere, "These are the plague-ridden schools to which you are compelled to send your children."

I think Cousin acted in good faith in disavowing pantheism. I think, too, that he inwardly accused himself of imprudence for

writing the words, "If God is not all, he is nothing;" but what author who has written much, has not been imprudent? When we speak of the relations of God and the world, we graze the rocks on every hand. It would have been embarrassing to defend his phrases in themselves; he did better and more skilfully: he found analogous expressions in Saint Augustine. "I am a pantheist," said he, "precisely in the sense in which Saint Augustine is a pantheist." Does it not seem that one ought to be safe behind a father of the Church, and such a father?

We must, in fact, distinguish with care between the two Cousins, — Cousin as instructor before 1830, and Cousin as superintendent of instruction after 1830: Cousin militant and Cousin regnant. On reading over his lectures from 1815 to 1830, I think I sometimes see a straining after effect, — the vice of the orator; sometimes the absence of a solution is hidden beneath the wilful obscurity of a formula, — the vice of the rhetorician; but I never see the fear of the master or of the dominant creed. It is the play of a free spirit, if not always of a very profound intelligence. I do not find the same characteristics in the writings that he composed after becoming administrator of philosophy. He now seems, on the contrary, anxious

only to be prudent. He constantly asserts his freedom, but we feel that he will not abuse it. Should he speak on the relations of the finite with the infinite, we are very sure that he would not repeat his former statements. Even in re-editing his former books he takes out all the sting. His freedom, proclaimed as a principle, is incomplete in practice. He is orthodox in his second manner. With this change I should not reproach him, had it merely fallen out so; but it is the result of deliberate intention, and therefore blameworthy. Under such conditions a man is not a philosopher; he is but a preacher,—a trusty and discreet preacher. In saying this I do not mean to attack Cousin; I merely classify him.

He thought that mankind owed to philosophy its progress, but to religion its peace, its happiness. Philosophy guides and consoles only the chosen few; it is the product only of a well-organized and self-controlled community; it disappears or becomes confused in a declining civilization. Even during philosophic eras, if there had been no priest by the side of the scholar, almost the whole of the human race would have been without a guide. If religion is so essential,—essential for well-being, that is, for morality, for consolation, for hope,—has philosophy the right to suppress it? Can

philosophy suppress what it cannot replace? The philosopher says of religion, "It is false, and I shall suppress it." The preacher or the politician replies, "It is useful, and I shall respect it."

Cousin, speaking as a politician, says expressly that to oppose religion, to enter the lists against it, is a criminal act. In this he resembles Socrates, who, after giving his opinion of the gods, still wishes to offer a libation before drinking the hemlock. All enlightened antiquity had ceased to believe, and had not ceased to sacrifice. The vulgar went to the temple from credulity, and the chosen few from patriotism.

All the liberals of the Restoration, with Cousin at their head, accepted religion in the interests of public morals. They respected it on this ground, but meant to oblige it to fulfil its function in their way, not in its own. This policy toward religion is that of the Savoyard vicar; it is that of the Constituent Assembly when it settled the civil status of the clergy; it is wholly of Rousseau's school, to which Cousin belongs. We are to-day amazed to hear religion and philosophy called "the two immortal sisters," because we are no longer swept on by that current of ideas. The liberals of those days demanded the sacraments without believing in them, and

treated the priests as fanatics for refusing the sacraments of the Church to those who did not accept the Church. In the discussions concerning education, — especially those concerning the ecclesiastical secondary schools, — the liberals imposed upon the Church obligations and restrictions which they thought liberal because profitable to their party, and which the Church regarded as violations of her freedom because contrary to her beliefs and principles.

This point of view must be taken in order to understand certain of Cousin's doctrines and the chief acts of his administration. He would have no chaplain at the Normal School, because a chaplain would hamper the teaching of philosophy; and at this great school philosophy must be freely expounded. But he demanded the presence of the parish priest in the cantonal school board; he declared loudly that no prosperity was possible for primary instruction without the friendly patronage of the clergy; and he placed the recitation of the catechism among the most important of school exercises.

It has often been repeated that Cousin himself made a catechism for the use of schools. A catechism! This is a little more than the truth, though not much more. Here is the complete title of this little book, now rather hard to procure: "Book of Moral and Religious

Instruction, for the Use of Catholic Primary, Elementary, and Higher Schools, Normal Schools, and Examining Boards, Authorized [on the second edition] by the Royal Council of Public Instruction." Levrault: Paris and Strasburg. 1834. 260 pp. 18 mo. The book is preceded by an "Advertisement" resembling a ministerial circular: "This is the book required by the law of June 28, 1833, which so properly places moral and religious instruction in the first rank among the materials of popular education." Then come counsels, or rather orders, to the teachers in the several grades: "The professor [in normal schools] should give regular instruction which all the pupils can write out, so that at the end of the course what they have written at different times may form a complete doctrinal course. . . . The present book of moral and religious instruction should form the basis of this instruction." The "Advertisement" is no less imperative in its orders to examining boards: "Examining boards are requested to guard against two opposite errors into which they might fall: the error of asking candidates questions historical only, and that of asking questions doctrinal only. . . . In the general examination, which should crown and terminate the courses of the elementary school, and serve as a basis for each child's certifi-

cate of dismissal, moral and religious instruction must have its place by the side of other branches of instruction, with the mention of the mark indicating the child's proficiency." Cousin's manner, and the ideas of his reports on primary instruction in Holland and Germany, are to be found in every line of this "Advertisement." The book is divided into two parts: the first recounts everything in the history of the human race, "and the plan of divine Providence" that prepared and made way for the coming of Jesus Christ and his doctrine; the second part is this doctrine itself. After having added that the historical part is taken from the Holy Scriptures and the doctrinal part from the most celebrated catechisms, the author is pleased to subjoin that "this compend, intended solely for schools, does not do away with the diocesan catechism, whose office it remains to prepare for the religious exercises appertaining to the Church."

I doubt whether this concession to the bishops was calculated to reassure them touching their superior right to teach religion themselves, and whether this declaration of conformity to the most celebrated catechisms satisfied them touching the book's orthodoxy. It might have been asked why a uniform text-book was necessary for the schools, and whether the Royal

Council had supposed that there might be diversity of doctrine between the catechisms of the different dioceses. Besides, since the diocesan catechism was preserved, what purpose was served by putting beside it a university catechism? Was there in this enterprise a reminiscence of the Empire, which had also required a uniform catechism? In having its catechism approved by ecclesiastical authority, the Empire had acted more regularly; in making it everywhere obligatory, the Empire had acted more despotically. The present catechism was obligatory only in the schools, — but in all the schools, — and perhaps it was fancied that in time a catechism so well recommended and so widely distributed would take the place of every other.

The clergy were not overmuch disturbed by this extremely bold attempt to put religious instruction into the hands of the Royal Council and its lay inspectors and teachers. The clergy had their representative in every grade of university administration, and the outside bishop was noiselessly ousted in the interests of the real bishops. This outside bishop, who was Cousin in person, dared neither to protest nor to show himself. Do I err in fathering this book upon him? I admit that he did not sign it, but he made it. In the first place, as a mem-

ber of the Council he certainly approved the book; its approval was certainly proposed by him; he certainly wrote the "Advertisement;" there certainly are, throughout the book, numerous pages of which he is the author. Was the remainder composed of divers extracts, excerpted by him "from the Holy Scriptures and from the most celebrated catechisms"? I think so. The catechism is not uninteresting. It is relatively clear. It explains everything. "*Q.* What is meant by the expression that the Son is consubstantial with the Father?—*A.* It means that the Son shares the Father's substance.—*Q.* How can this be conceived?—*A.* The Father cannot subsist for one moment without knowing himself, and by knowing himself he produces his Son. [If the author gave notes, he would not fail to write at the foot of the page: God's thought is the thought of thought.]—*Q.* How has the Holy Ghost the same nature as the Father and the Son?—*A.* The Father and the Son cannot subsist for one moment without loving one another, and by loving one another they produce the Holy Ghost." And a little farther on: "*Q.* How do these two natures [the divine nature and the human nature] make but one person in Jesus Christ?—*A.* In about the same way that soul and body in ourselves make but one man."

By the Restoration the professors in the colleges were driven to display a rather ignoble sort of sham credulity; the pupils were also driven to it, since they were obliged every month to present a certificate of confession. Some traces of this sorry past were left in university manners and habits after 1830, although the change of front in the University had been complete and noisy, — too noisy, indeed, for the honor of the University after its long submission. All this is rather lost sight of now that the century is closing, yet it is history. There was no religious instruction at the Normal School after 1830; but low mass on Sunday was obligatory. (This became optional after a time; to offset this, however, the lapse of time brought a chaplain.) Mass, then, was obligatory while I was a pupil at the Normal School (1833–1836), with M. Cousin as Councillor-Director, and M. Guigniaut as Director under his orders. We were obliged to bring a prayer-book, and there was a conspiracy on the part of some pupils to go without one. They were punished by confinement. Next Sunday they brought books, and purposely took their seats in front of M. Guigniaut, who was immediately struck by their devotion. He took his neighbor's book. It was a *variorum* Lucretius, the Leyden edition of 1725. He looked

at it with entire gravity and returned it to the pupil (Amédée Jacques), saying in a low voice: "Read rather Bentley and Wakefield's edition, London, 1796." Our missal was Lucretius; but we held a book, and the honor of the University was satisfied.

Cousin did not ask his professors to go to mass. I even believe that he would have thought it rather unbecoming to go, unless indeed one was a good Catholic. He merely wished us to be respectful to religion and to the clergy. He absolutely required that there should not be one word in the instruction of college professors which might seem to be directed either against the respect due to religions or against their doctrines. We all taught the absolute independence of thought, and consequently of philosophy; on this point he was as firm as any of us. We all avoided with the greatest care speaking of questions purely theological, such as the Trinity, the fall, redemption. But religions, besides their theological dogmas, have philosophical dogmas. They have their beliefs as to the spirituality and the immortality of the soul, as to human freedom, as to morals, as to creation. A college professor, or even a university professor, who should have expressed doubts concerning the spirituality of the soul or our free

will, would infallibly have been either removed or dismissed as soon as Cousin had been informed of it. This was not on his part an assault upon our personal liberty, since we remained free to think or speak as we pleased, provided we resigned our chairs. It might even be maintained that he could not allow us complete freedom of speech without offending against the liberty of our pupils and their families. As the college course in philosophy was required of all who wished to come up for the baccalaureate, — since the certificate of studies was not abolished until after the Revolution of 1848, — it was impossible to oblige a Christian family to listen to Antichristian teaching. The instructions were: In whatever belongs to the domain of religion, neutrality; in whatever belongs to the domain of philosophy, spiritualism, deism.

Cousin related to me that in the course of his ministry King Louis Philippe repeated to him on several occasions: "Do not get me into trouble with my good queen." The queen, though never having anything to do with politics, had much to do with religion; and when she was told that anything was going wrong in that direction, she begged the king to be prudent. The king asked nothing better than to be prudent, nor Cousin either (since his eleva-

tion); and the latter used to ask us, as he knew how to ask, "not to get him into trouble." More than one among us left philosophy for history or political economy, impelled by nothing save these warnings, which, though paternal, were express and clear.

I have said that our provincial compeers came every year, at the holidays, and even sometimes at the Easter vacation, to pass in review before the sovereign master of their destinies. Cousin had his favorites, who were none other than the most laborious and the most deserving, for I cannot too often repeat that he was at bottom very just; and upon reflection, we always found a motive for what had seemed to us mere caprices.

This complex man, of whom I could relate traits of avarice and traits of munificence, had a fancy somewhat rare among all-powerful functionaries, — he was fond of having his young professors about him, and liked to give them a dinner. You know that he was a bachelor. He lived at the Sorbonne, in his library; for this is the name to apply to his suite of rooms. He did not keep open table. In the morning he ate bread and honey, or a plateful of cabbage soup, or some such favorite dish, — truly a hermit's repast. In the evening he dined with his great friends, for this philoso-

pher was worldly; he was fond of high society without belonging to it, and enjoyed the praises it heaped upon him. On the somewhat rare days when he was not invited, he took one of us with him to dine at a restaurant. For some years I was almost always the one; indeed, we ended by dining at Risbecq's, on the Odéon Square, and sharing the expense. I was never, I think, so near his heart as Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, Franck, Bouillier, and perhaps — somewhat later — Caro and Janet; but I was very intimate with him. In the holidays he dined the flower of our provincial professors. I beg you to believe that the fare was not luxurious; but we had a good dinner, and the host on such occasions was in a charming humor.

One day it happened that he could not receive five or six of our colleagues when they rang his door-bell. He was very much annoyed by it. "I know where to find them," said I, "I will have them come to-morrow." "Better still, invite them to dinner this evening." — "Capital!" "These and the others you meet," he called after me as I closed the door. "Let it be at Pinson's at seven o'clock." I invited a round dozen of them. I called for him about half-past six rather chop-fallen, for I had just remembered that it was Good Friday. This was the first thing I said when I entered his

study. "Ah, what a pity!" said he. "Why did we not think of that this morning? And they will be at Pinson's in a quarter of an hour? It is impossible to see them beforehand." "Impossible." — "We might bring them here; Madame Blanchard would give us our dinner." I knew by hard experience his housekeeper's talents, but anything was better than to cause a scandal. We began to measure the table; it would positively hold but six guests, and there were fourteen of us. "Come what may," said he, "we will dine without flesh; and if we get a thump or two, we can shrug our shoulders." The dinner was very entertaining. Vacherot attempted to talk metaphysics and Franck psychology, each according to his dominant passion; but Cousin, all the while, talked of nothing but the duty of not dining at a restaurant on Good Friday.

He had no other days to give us, no other house in which to receive us. We held, as we dined, our little semiannual conference,— "Not a very gay dinner-party," he used to say. Philosophy was threatened. If it came to blows, he would bear the whole brunt of them, and would not suffer any one to claim the least share in the combat; but to make defence possible we must first make our teaching irreproachable. "Don't allow yourselves to touch

upon religion, even in private conversation. The Trinity, original sin, redemption? These are matters with which I have nothing to do. Inquire of my reverend colleague, the college chaplain. I may have a religion, — that is my affair. As professor, I demonstrate the truths common to all religions. I am the common helper of them all; I must not, can not, will not be a hindrance to any one of them. But," he added with a solemn air, "there is pantheism! [Pantheism was then the great war-cry raised against him, and consequently against the University.] Pantheism, gentlemen [I omit a refutation of pantheism, spiced with invectives that might have been uttered by the Rev. Abbé Combalot, who was preaching a Lent-sermon within a few steps of us.], — . . . if you are accused of pantheism, call at once upon the bishop." This was his great specific. He thought, or pretended to think, that his professors of philosophy always had free access to the bishop's palace.

During our third year at the Normal School he had described to us beforehand just how we should proceed at the palace, the speeches we were to make, the replies that would be made to us. By the way, I do not think that he was himself a very constant visitor at the palace of the Archbishop of Paris. He ex-

celled in composing little comic scenes in this way, and acted them — the expression is none too strong — with the talent of a great comedian. In these improvised farces the philosopher was always a sort of miniature statesman, and the bishop a very profound theologian. "'Monsignor, I am accused of pantheism. It is true; I am a pantheist, — like Saint Augustine.' Here you will quote all those expressions of Saint Augustine which would be more reprehensible than my own, if all were not subordinated — in his case as in mine — to our respective doctrines touching freedom and grace. Be on your guard," he added, "because the bishop is very able. Talleyrand often told me that nothing sharpens the wits like theological studies. He was right; all diplomatists should begin their training at the school of Saint-Sulpice. Be drawn into no discussion with him! Always lead him to the question of free-will. On this ground you are invincible. What is substance without causality? 'Do you admit, Monsignor, that I believe in the independence of our judgments and the freedom of our acts?' You carry this belief perhaps further than he would have you carry it. Should he assume a threatening mien, you will immediately rise: 'Monsignor, I am dependent upon my chief. I refer you to

M. Cousin.' Then I intervene!" (These last words in the tone of Rodrigue in "The Cid": "*Nous nous levons alors!*"[1]) At this point he began to describe with extraordinary raciness the session of the Chamber of Peers in which he would undertake the defence of philosophy. People had come running in from all the adjoining rooms to hear these fine things and to see M. Cousin dine that day at his inn. I used often to think, in 1844, when he made head so gallantly against excited public opinion, that he had been gifted with second-sight in 1838.

It was at precisely the moment when he was growing very prudent, that the complaints against philosophy, which were complaints against him, assumed alarming proportions. On the morrow of the Revolution of July, M. de Montalembert and the Rev. Abbé Lacordaire had demanded liberty of instruction.[2] They had demanded it with entire sincerity, because they wanted it and had a passion for it. M. Veuillot did not want it, but with pro-

[1] "Then we rise," words of Don Rodrigue when describing the success of the ambuscade he had formed against the Moors. ("The Cid," Act. IV. Scene 3.) — TR.

[2] "Liberty, that is, for persons outside the official hierarchy of public instruction to open schools." See Matthew Arnold's charming description of "A French Eton." "Free instruction" means, therefore, private rather than gratuitous instruction. — TR.

found policy divined that by demanding it he would mightily embarrass adversaries who could not refuse it without violating all their principles. Making no secret of his intentions, he said straightforwardly: "Liberty being one of your principles, you cannot refuse it to me. Were I in power I should refuse you liberty, because it is no principle of mine." They did not fail to reply: "You ask it, then, only to destroy it." But in spite of M. Veuillot's ultimate intentions, liberty was no less liberty, and right no less right. Every sentence written by those who answered him in the newspapers was disastrous to themselves.

"I take this weapon," said he, "and I take it from your own hands, because I have no other with which to overthrow you. And I must overthrow you, eclectics, you, pantheists, because you are the enemies of my faith." If Cousin answered that he was not a pantheist, "Ah! suppose you were not!" said Louis Veuillot; "you are certainly not a materialist; you were never a materialist. Nevertheless, materialism is one of my grievances against you, because you are philosophy, and all the rights you claim for yourself materialism will claim for itself in its day, which is near at hand."

This fierce adversary, whom Cousin long

affected to despise, troubled him greatly. Veuillot was the chief of numerous allies, who recognized him neither as their chief nor as their ally. This implacable foe of liberty, detesting it while he made use of it, and the noble friends of liberty, demanding it for its own sake, combined to demonstrate to Catholics that the official philosophy (a title that might properly be given to M. Cousin's philosophy) was opposed to the philosophy avowed, patronized, and watched over by the Church. Help came to them from every quarter. "L'Univers" [1] was eagerly seconded by the whole religious and Legitimist press, separated from it in other respects by a great gulf. In these journals the controversy was scholarly, keen, terse, while Veuillot howled and bellowed, without, after all, losing any of his strength. He bawled in order to attract and arouse the idlers. He represented the university men with a comic force that was irresistible. I know not if the rest laughed; but I often laughed as at a good comic play, somewhat burlesque, but very pointed. Nevertheless, I was more often indignant, for he was dishonest; he garbled texts to suit himself, attributed to one what belonged to another, drew inferences never implied in the principles, attributed evil

[1] Veuillot's ultramontane newspaper. — TR.

designs to his adversaries, and went the length of charging them with imaginary vices. He was like a mastiff filling France with his barking against the poor university men, who were held in leash by Cousin and condemned to make no reply. When Veuillot's newspaper did not afford space enough, he issued pamphlets. Every one read his "Freethinkers," which are now no longer read, because there is a fashion in pamphlets as in novels, and because Louis Veuillot, great as he was, was no such pamphleteer as Pascal.

Among Veuillot's imitators — and they were numerous — must be reckoned Des Garets, author of "The University Monopoly." This writer had little of Veuillot but his grossness; yet he found readers, for this war against the eclectics was popular. Even bishops took part in it. I remember a charge from the Bishop of Chartres, in which I was accused of writing two large volumes demanding the restoration of divorce. Now, I never wrote two large volumes on divorce, nor even one small volume. I wrote merely one short chapter, and this was not to demand the restoration of divorce, but to oppose it with all my might; for, my whole life long, I have been a declared and passionate enemy of divorce. This is one example to show how far grave and evidently sin-

cere men allowed themselves to be carried by polemical ardor. At the very time when this great cobble-stone was launched at my head, I was in bad odor at the University, because I agreed with its enemies in demanding the suppression of the university monopoly. M. Cousin reproached me with attacking "the great work of Napoleon, the main safeguard of society." Truly, the trade of the Liberal is hard!

While the Catholics reproached the university men with their rashness, Pierre Leroux and his confederates reproached them with their weakness. That junto entertained a singular prejudice. Pierre Leroux set out with the principle that every philosopher is necessarily a pantheist. When a professor declared that he was not a pantheist, Leroux retorted: "You lie! you are a pantheist, being a philosopher; and moreover Cousin, whose valet you are in square cap and robe, is incontestably a pantheist. You are afraid of Veuillot and the priests. You are a coward, a disgrace to philosophy."

Arrayed against the philosophers there was, finally, a third party, — that of the statesmen. The statesmen, in so far as they were philosophers, — which, indeed, was not far, — were of the philosophers' opinion. But as statesmen they desired peace at any price; this disturb-

ance raised by Veuillot annoyed them, and they laid the blame of it less on him, the ring-leader in it, than on his victims, the innocent occasion of it. They found no better way to silence the disturbance than by granting that Veuillot and his allies were right. This philosophy, and especially these philosophers, were not worth all the noise made about them. There was simply nothing for it but to get rid of them. They said to Cousin: "You are making trouble for us!"

This campaign against the University was prolonged several years. Cousin had his hands full: first, to keep his professors from giving occasion for criticism by their teaching; then, when, in spite of all, criticism appeared, to keep them from replying. When they complained of this law of silence, he said, "I take it all on my shoulders." But he was himself thought to be very silent; he was almost accused of connivance. It was in the University that it was first said, "He is to be a cardinal,"—a very harmless jest, of which he was not the only victim. At last the organic law of 1844 gave him opportunity and made it his duty to speak.

He collected his speeches, made in April and May, 1844, in the Chamber of Peers, in a curious volume entitled "Defence of the Uni-

versity and of Philosophy." This is a very important historical document, showing what was the state of mind, at this period, of philosophers and Catholics, of Liberals and Conservatives. Cousin here displays much wide and varied information, much vigor and philosophic ingenuity, and true eloquence. On the rare occasions upon which he had mounted the tribune, — whether he was intimidated by the auditory, or whether the subjects of which he spoke were new to him, — he had made speeches of little range or brilliancy, approving himself neither the great philosopher nor the great orator of the Sorbonne. This time his whole strength was revealed. Never did an orator display more elevation, more life, more courage, more cogent arguments, more irony, or more passion. Although he defended the University, which is dear to me, I shall not say that the right was always on his side. It is his talent, not his cause, that I praise.

Aside from the attacks of the Encyclopedists, which he was obliged to disregard, — this being neither the place nor the time to boast of his philosophic daring, — he replied to every attack and to every assailant: to M. de Montalembert, who demanded liberty of instruction, and was indignant at the monopoly; to M. de Ségur-Lamoignon and other violent Catholic

partisans, who slandered his teaching and his books; to the members of the committee and the statesmen, who proposed to cut down the instruction in philosophy and to preserve it, as it were, only in name. He was so clear that the philosophical instruction in all public chairs depended upon him and was inspired by him, — he declared this so loudly himself, — that he appeared at the bar, so to say, as one arraigned before the Upper Chamber. He was attacked at every turn, often bitterly, sometimes perfidiously. There was a series of indictments against philosophy, and against him by inference, and there were others aimed at him directly and personally. But he soon turned the tables. Received at first with a certain coolness seasoned with curiosity, then with growing favor, he soon felt himself master of the assembly and vanquisher of his adversaries. He was not admitted to be right on all points, but was grudged neither admiration nor marks of sympathy, — in short, he had the glory of preserving philosophy and the University from threatened ostracism.

To M. de Montalembert, who made his maiden speeches in the Chamber as the champion of free instruction, he replied with as much politeness toward the person as arrogance toward the doctrine, that it could not

be granted. Freedom of instruction had never existed in France. There had been no trace of it either under the Old Régime or under the Republic. It was not the Empire that gave the state supreme authority in all that relates to instruction. The Empire found this authority a national tradition, and strongly organized it for the glory and tranquillity of the country. This authority the state cannot, should not give up. Not only does the state itself teach, — having charge of souls and possessing a doctrine, — but there is no teaching apart from the state without its authority and consent. All private instruction is under its jurisdiction. Leibnitz said: "Give me control of education for a century, and I shall be master of the state;" Napoleon was fond of repeating this: Cousin repeats it after them. He adds explicitly that the state is responsible for whatever it allows to be done, as well as for whatever it does itself; that this is the invariable tradition of the old monarchy and of all civilized communities. Never was freedom of instruction denied and rejected more clearly and frankly. Cousin does not even dissemble that he defends the lay authority by the very arguments employed in the opposite camp to defend ecclesiastical authority. He claims for the state all the rights that the Ultramontanes claim for

the Church. He defends, therefore, not only the University, but the university monopoly.

On this point—I have already had occasion to say this, while deploring it—he had all the Liberals of the time on his side. He was even more favorable to private instruction than many of his friends, since he was inclined to suppress the certificate of studies. He voted to retain it in order to keep pupils from the Jesuits, but none the less he was opposed to its principle. He was, accordingly, the most liberal of Liberals; but that is not saying that he was really liberal in respect to instruction. The Liberals under the Restoration had but one dream,—to take from the clergy the control they exercised over education, and to exercise it in their stead. The Liberals had seized control after 1830; they were as jealous of it as their predecessors; they exercised it with the same security and with the same severity. They could not play this part so well as the Catholics, for two reasons: because they could not, like the Catholics, claim infallibility and call themselves the possessors, the keepers, of the truth; and because they styled themselves Liberals at the very moment when, by suppressing free instruction, they confined freedom of conscience to that inner tribunal on which no human power can encroach. M. Cousin, and

the majority in the Chamber of Peers, did not understand freedom. He said to Montalembert: "This is not freedom complaining, it is the spirit of domination murmuring." All was safe, in their eyes, if the University had a good course of study and irreproachable instruction.

But, said men like Ségur-Lamoignon, Barthélemy Sauvaire, Beugnot, Barthe, and, though with many reserves and compliments, even the Duke de Broglie, university instruction, and even university administration, which is but a continuation of university instruction, instead of calming and fortifying the mind, merely agitates and disturbs it. "You teach Cartesianism," said one, "and that is methodical doubt." "You are eclectic," said another, "and consequently admit all doctrines; and this is much the same thing as to reject them all." "All your efforts," it was said in several quarters, "end in raising difficulties which you are powerless to solve." Then came the everlasting argument as to pantheism: "M. Cousin has said that God is in all and that He is the substance of all." It was in his reply to all these arguments directed against his philosophy, that M. Cousin showed his real superiority. The danger for him was to go too far in the discussion and to transform the Senate into a kind

of academic assembly. He confined himself to very summary but strong proofs, which, without giving a handle to subtle criticism, carried conviction into sincere minds. The exaggerations and sophisms of his adversaries helped him. Was it not a proof of their ignorance to see in methodic doubt a step toward scepticism? Could not the existence of God be demonstrated, after the example of Bossuet and Fénelon, without raising all the problems of the relations of cause and substance with phenomena? In banishing God from instruction, even from elementary instruction, was there not a risk of banishing Him from men's hearts and consciences? Every one around him felt, while he spoke, how perilous it was for an assembly made up of generals, magistrates, lawyers, scholars, and a single professor of philosophy, to plunge into metaphysical discussions; and there was an amendment proposing to have the philosophical programme arranged by the Cabinet! There was a great burst of laughter when Cousin undertook to describe in advance the Cabinet meeting in which Marshal Soult should give his opinion on the origin of our ideas. Cousin came out of these debates with greatly increased reputation. The whole University was full of gratitude, and gave noisy evidence of it.

Yet there was one grief left in philosophers' hearts,—they felt that on certain points they had been defended too much. Their prudence had been too completely established; they were at once saved and disgraced. They were permitted to be laymen,—that was something; they were not permitted to be independent. After stating that philosophy had been taught in France for five hundred years, and that Royer-Collard had taken from the ancient University the programme followed in the colleges under the Restoration, Cousin added, speaking of himself, that far from extending this programme, he had made it still more limited. And it was true! Jouffroy had been the spokesman of all when he raised his outcry about the humbling of philosophy.

I conceived the idea of appealing to the great masters of philosophy, and of putting our instruction under their protection. I came to an understanding with my friend Charpentier, the publisher, and secured the collaboration of Amédée Jacques and Saisset. The collection was to consist of ten volumes. I straightway published a volume of selections from the works of Descartes, adding a pretty long introduction. Amédée Jacques published two volumes from Leibnitz; Saisset contributed Euler's "Letters." We were in the field, and

our little collection was succeeding very well. The selections I had made and the programme I had marked out were much commended. All at once, I received a letter from Cousin, summoning me to his lodgings to deliberate upon the Charpentier collection. I mentioned the matter to my two associates, who were also summoned. Jacques was greatly astonished; Saisset less so, and for good reason. In Cousin's library, where he received us, we found Franck, Vacherot, Riaux, and Bouillier. Cousin informed us that he had conceived the idea of forming a collection, that he had prepared a programme, and had even begun work upon it. At this news Jacques and I were more amazed than ever. We saw the time when, had we not signed the "Descartes" and the "Leibnitz," we should have been led to abandon our project. The principal result was to add to the list of authors Father Buffier and Father André, of whom, I confess, I should never have thought. Cousin took upon himself the publication of the philosophic works of Father André, — an honor to us as great as it was unexpected. It was not easy to escape him.

There was something strange about this way of doing. On looking back, I think that I can explain his conduct, which harmonized with the whole body of his essentially monarchical views.

Attributing, as he did, complete control of instruction to the state, it was quite in keeping with his political doctrine that no work intended to form a part of college instruction, and to become a principal instrument in it, should be outside the sphere of his influence. Thus he dealt with M. Franck's "Dictionary of the Philosophical Sciences," — but this time, I believe, with the consent and at the request of the author of the work, to whom he left the responsibility and the honor. When I thought of editing a philosophical review, I again appealed to Jacques and Saisset, and Saisset again ran to inform M. Cousin. Jacques and I were not rebels, still less ingrates; we were half-smothered disciples in quest of freedom and independence. Saisset being a man of deep policy, and desiring to curry favor at headquarters, hastened to tell Cousin of our plans, and, as I suppose, of our hopes. This time we were angry enough to break with Saisset. We worked with a will to get out our first number, and christened it "Free Thought," — a name intended to perpetuate our autonomy, and one which actually secured it. The name has since been much in vogue, though somewhat changed in meaning. To-day, in current speech, freethinker means atheist, and this is the opposite of what we were, — Jacques and I.

I need not tell here how I was for a year — either over my signature, or in articles unsigned, or signed with an assumed name — the most active contributor to this review, and how I was turned out one fine morning by my own friends, on the pretext that I was too reactionary for their new aspirations. M. Cousin was much displeased with this publication. He did not manifest his disapproval so bluntly as I thought he would. Had this review survived, and had I continued in charge, it would certainly have been respectful to him; but it would have assured the independence of professors of philosophy. They would have ceased to be echoes, and would have become persons.

It disappeared. In those days everything was foundering and vanishing. M. Cousin had, in 1849, one more great interval of administrative activity, and it was the last. He was a member of the Commission appointed by M. de Falloux to prepare the law of 1850. This commission was composed of twenty-six members, among whom there were perhaps five University men and two or three Liberals. M. Thiers was chairman. The deliberations were scarcely more than a dialogue between him and M. Dupanloup. M. Dupanloup had a considerable majority; but M. Thiers, though in the minority, had first his personal weight

and then his authority in the Chamber. Without his aid, M. de Falloux and his commission could do nothing.

M. Thiers began with the avowed desire to form an alliance with the Catholics and to make use of them to save imperilled society. He thought it more imperilled than it was. Whether it was in peril or not, he was the man to defend it. He had defended it by his books and speeches, and he now wished to defend it by an alliance with the bishops. This was a new phase in his life. It was also a new phase in the history of Catholicism, which, in order to destroy the university monopoly, was making an ardent appeal to liberty. To accept liberty of instruction, and to form a league with the clergy, were, in 1849, one and the same thing. How very far from the Inquisition! M. Thiers wrote to M. Madier de Montjau, father of the present deputy of that name: "Touching liberty of instruction, my position is changed. It is changed, not from any revolution in my convictions, but from a revolution in the social state. When the University, representing the good and sensible French middle class, taught our children according to Rollin's methods, and gave preference to the sound old classical studies over the physical and wholly material studies of those who cry up profes-

sional instruction, then, indeed, I was willing to sacrifice liberty of instruction."

This is quite in the spirit of the old Liberals, to whom facts were everything and principles almost nothing. The convert did not, however, yield as much as was desired, but he yielded much. He not only agreed to liberty of instruction,—at which I rejoice because I have always desired and defended it,—but he submitted to the curtailment of the University, a course warranted neither by facts nor by principles. M. Dupanloup, seconded by M. de Montalembert, demanded in the name of freedom a return to clerical rule. M. Thiers, seconded by M. Cousin, preserved some vestiges of the University, but to do this required all the authority of the one and all the eloquence of the other. At certain moments in the discussion a rupture was imminent. Among other things, the Catholics wished to give the religious societies exclusive charge of primary instruction. Cousin pleaded energetically for lay teachers, and succeeded in saving them from exclusion. For secondary instruction, M. de Falloux and his friends wished to recall the Jesuits; but M. Thiers and M. Cousin opposed this with so much energy that it had to be given up. M. Dupanloup proposed to say, "the societies recognized by the Church."

"No," said Cousin, "we must put, 'recognized by the Church and by the State.'" This brought the discussion to bear upon the Jesuits, a society not recognized by the State. The Catholics, defeated touching the recall of the Jesuits, demanded at least silence. If the Jesuits were not mentioned in the law, M. de Falloux would admit them; after him, we should see. By taking this ground they carried their point, after a very sharp discussion. It was not very brave on their part, nor very honest on the part of the others.

On the whole, the law of 1850 was looked upon by the Catholics as a triumph and by the University as a defeat. The University blamed M. Thiers, who had been its champion in 1842, and M. Cousin, upon whom it had staked all its hopes. It was known that he had defended the University and had fought the Jesuits; but he had yielded touching the certificate of studies, degrees, examining boards, touching the very name of the University, and touching the Jesuits themselves. Silence was all that he had granted to the Jesuits, but the Jesuits were satisfied; silence, with M. de Falloux in the ministry, was for them a permission to return and to teach. To this compromise Cousin had made himself a party. Moreover, he had become the enthusiastic apologist of

the other societies, — though they were hardly more acceptable to the University than the Jesuits, — and had renewed his time-worn declamations concerning the two immortal sisters. In all this there was nothing popular, — least of all liberty of instruction. I was perhaps its only defender in the University, with the single exception of the former editor of "The Globe," M. Dubois, who had sat in the Commission, but had taken no part in the debates.

By the events of the close of the year 1851, which changed everything in France, our little philosophical circle was scattered. Philosophical teaching disappeared even in name; the colleges retained nothing but a class in logic. Of course Cousin had lost his regiment.

Jacques went to meet death in South America. I abandoned teaching rather than take oath to the Empire. The newspapers were closed to us. These were hard times, especially for those who had to work for their daily bread. I continued to see M. Cousin, but more rarely. I had supplied his place for more than ten years; his place was now supplied by one of my pupils, an abler man than I, and one with whom he had reason to be better satisfied. Cousin's great admiration for the Empire contributed to estrange us from each other. But

he did not take office under it. He might have done so if he would; the Empire would have lavished upon him all its honors and emoluments. He deemed retirement the worthier course. He had resigned all his offices, and now his only connection with the University was his title, and his stipend as a professor at the Sorbonne. In 1852 he finally threw this up. He kept his lodgings in the Sorbonne. He could not remove his library, and would not have desired to do so if he could, because he had set his heart on leaving it intact to the University. Nearly all of his friends were in exile; the exile of M. Thiers, whom he regretted most of all, lasted for a year. Cousin lived in his library and in the Academies, meeting the friends of his youth, especially M. Mignet, with whom he lamented the absence of M. Thiers. He did not abandon his philosophers, Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, Franck, Vacherot, Bouillier; or their juniors, M. Caro, M. Paul Janet, M. Charles Waddington. But though he did not abandon the philosophers, he rather forsook philosophy. In the latter years of his life he hardly published anything except literary works. To conclude these recollections, I proceed rather to name than to analyze these works.

CHAPTER V.

HIS LOVES.

I ONCE heard M. Cousin say to a philosopher who thought of deserting to the camp of historical criticism: "Do not scatter yourself, *nolite exspatiari;* keep on ploughing the same furrow; give yourself the merit and the benefit of perseverance. If you write on all subjects, you may show the flexibility of your mind; you will not show its strength. One must have a career, and give unity to one's life."

Cousin made so great a mark in philosophy that he may be said to have himself remained faithful to this precept. He could with impunity compose works on literary and erudite subjects; he was none the less, for his contemporaries and for posterity, a philosopher. Those who think he was less a philosopher than a philosophical preacher, and that what he, like Cicero, especially loved in philosophy was a kind of noble and attractive literature, will say that his digressions were very long;

that they consumed almost a third of his intellectual life; and that when he had once entered upon the study of the seventeenth century, he derived from it so many fine stories and curious portraits that he really appeared to enjoy the intercourse of Madame de Longueville as much as that of Xenophanes and Proclus. The fact is, that he wrote no less than nine volumes on the women and the society of the seventeenth century. I try to discover how he was led to it. Sometimes a chance incident is enough to give birth to a book. The finding of a manuscript of Abelard in a provincial library calls M. Cousin's attention to that scholastic hero, whose story is more moving than his writings. At another time a manuscript by Pascal falls into his hands, and furnishes him with an opportunity to show that behind the Pascal we possessed there exists another Pascal, greater and more genuine. I might cite as another instance the discovery of the letters of Malebranche, revealing Father André to him, and bringing us an interesting little book. Yet Cousin is not governed by whim: with him reflection is supreme; nor does it govern merely the movement of his thought, — he undertakes each work at the proper time, and, to borrow his own expression, he gives unity to his life. When the reaction of 1820 gave

him leisure, he issued a translation and two editions, but of whom? Of Plato, of Proclus, and of Descartes, his three inspirers, his three masters. Having thus balanced his account with the past, he set out for Germany, where, he says, Kant had produced a philosophical revolution as great as our political Revolution of 1789; and here he found his two new masters, Schelling and Fichte.

I think it was Pascal who began to turn him aside from philosophy properly so called. What! a philosopher? Yes, and a very great one; but one who was somewhat nervous, somewhat out of sorts, a great invalid; the honor and the scourge of philosophy; tormented by our weak reason, to which he gives a vigorous and tragical shock without being able either to destroy it or to get rid of it. Cousin thought about Pascal for a whole year, and wrote on Pascal a book even more elegant than philosophic, — an altogether peerless critical monograph. With this book is connected an episode in his life which, while not to be exaggerated, is not greatly to his honor, — an episode that made a terrible noise for a whole term. The tale is really a trifling one.

Among Jouffroy's papers had been found material for a volume of "Miscellanies." The widow intrusted these manuscripts to Damiron,

the faithful friend of the deceased, — Damiron, whom Cousin called "the wisest of the wise," a man whom no one knew without loving him. The most important of these manuscripts was a kind of autobiography, in which Jouffroy spoke especially of the history of his mind. This piece passed from hand to hand among the faithful before being printed, and we were all charmed and touched by it, for it disclosed all the candor and all the elevation of this choice spirit. Damiron offered it to the "Revue des Deux Mondes" which eagerly accepted it, and an agreement was made with Buloz that I should carefully re-read the manuscript and correct the proofs. I did so. A day or two before the review was to appear, Damiron came up to my room to get the proof-sheets, already marked "Ready for press," and carried them away to take a last look at them.

It was Saturday. On leaving me he went to a session of the Academy of Moral Sciences, where he sat beside Cousin. Entering, he places his hat before him, with the proofs in it. Cousin, who as usual had an eye to everything, catches sight of the printed proofs. "What have you there?" "Jouffroy's memoir, that I told you of, and that you would not read in manuscript." The session being un-

interesting, Cousin takes up the memoir and looks it over. He immediately stumbles upon that oft-repeated passage, in which Jouffroy, speaking of his stay at the Normal School and of his studies there, complains that all the talk was of the origin of ideas, and that nothing was said of the problem of human destiny, which was even then — and throughout his life — his chief preoccupation. "Philosophy was in a hole." And he concluded with these words: "All this was due to the ignorance of our young master." Does this not appear very innocent? It was all the more innocent because Jouffroy, though he did not then see the importance of the problem of the origin of ideas, was not long in finding it out, and in becoming absorbed in it, like his "young master." This young master was Cousin, who had entered upon the teaching of philosophy before being a philosopher. In the France of that day he could not have done otherwise. Jouffroy's simple and true phrase, which had struck no one, and would probably have passed unnoticed, seemed to Cousin a mortal insult. How could Jouffroy have written it? And how could Damiron — and others — have let it stand? "You must leave it out." "No such thing. I can round out an unfinished phrase, set an incorrect phrase upon its legs;

but change the author's thought I cannot, ought not, will not." And Damiron undertook the task — easy enough with any other person — of showing Cousin that this criticism, if it was one, was quite inoffensive, and that his fame would not suffer from it. Cousin did not take the trouble to discuss it. He went straight to Madame Jouffroy, who only knew that her husband had been the pupil and the friend of Cousin, and would not willingly have offended him, and that, if the phrase was too harsh, it must be a hasty expression which her husband himself would not have failed to correct. The phrase was corrected; it was a very small matter, — one expression instead of another, a retouch that from all possible points of view it would have been better not to make. Damiron resisted obstinately, and Buloz made a great ado; but Madame Jouffroy, for whom Cousin was at that very time soliciting a pension, imposed her will, and the article appeared without the offensive word. On the very same day the whole story was published by Pierre Leroux, who had been on the watch, and the following month his articles were collected in a little work entitled "The Mutilation of Jouffroy's Manuscripts by the Eclectics." Cousin, to avoid a pin-prick, had wantonly incurred a great scandal. He who suffered most from

it, and suffered cruelly, was the innocent Damiron.

It has been said — and I believe it — that it was with the desire to create a diversion, that Cousin began his campaign against the friends of Pascal who were guilty of mutilating his writings after his death. He loudly maintained that no one can change a syllable in a posthumous publication without infringing the rights of the dead and the rights of the human mind, the master and owner of great works as soon as produced. To this noble zeal we are indebted for an admirable dissertation. Cousin first read it to the French Academy, and before long brought it out in a book that has given rise to several fine editions of Pascal's "Thoughts." The idea of accusing him, after that, of taking liberties with Jouffroy's prose!

In reading this dissertation on the need of a new edition of Pascal's "Thoughts," we are impressed by three things, — the correctness and breadth of Cousin's literary knowledge, the evident pleasure he takes in treating æsthetic and critical questions, and his scholarly passion for fine editions and for the discovery of variants and of manuscripts. His library, which he presented to the University, is the best preserved and one of the most valuable in Paris,

and attests that philosophy did not absorb all his affections. He was very rich in fine engravings, in original editions, in the classics ancient and modern, — chiefly in seventeenth-century classics; these he put in the place of honor in the finest bindings, setting the rarest editions beside the luxurious editions. I wish that my friend Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, as a relaxation after publishing a fine translation of Aristotle in twenty volumes, would give himself the pleasure and do us the service of writing a descriptive catalogue of this library. It would be a whole chapter in M. Cousin's life. There is not one of these volumes that he has not a hundred times handled, turned over and over, taken down, consulted. Many of them cost him prolonged hunts, long scenes in the back shops of booksellers, miracles of diplomacy, and at a pinch even a few lies. As for money, — a thing he was not lavish of, — he always had some for his books. He was a favorite with all the book-mongers. There were battles to be fought before getting his last word and his money; but more than one among them is a scholar and an artist; and such a man prefers a tilt with a scholar and an artist like Cousin, to the money of an ignoramus who buys a curious book for vanity and not for love.

When the Duchess of Orleans came to France, Cousin learned that she had named him in the very foremost rank of our great men. You may imagine how proud he was. "I shall offer her one of my works." He might offer the Princess Hélène his "Lectures on Kant" or his "Philosophical Fragments": she was competent to read them. He thought it more gallant to give her his "Report on Public Instruction in Prussia," and happily, as he had presented it to the King, there remained one copy on Holland paper. For the first time, he told Beauzonnet to give himself free scope. They two planned to make a peerless binding. The finest skins were examined, the quality of different kinds of gilt was tested, tools were made on purpose. The very case must be a masterpiece. On one side were to be seen the arms of France, on the other those of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. Within, the arms were quartered. Nothing could equal the fineness of the tracery, the elegance and just proportion of the ornamentation. It took time; the Duchess had come, and had given Cousin a very gracious reception, and the book was still in the binder's hands. At last the day came when all was complete. The book was transported, with immense precaution, from Beauzonnet's shop to the Sorbonne, and installed

by itself upon a table in the midst of the large library room. Thither the great connoisseurs were invited to see it. Téchener was summoned, De Sacy, Charles Nodier, Libri, who lived across the street; also Cousin's associates in the French Academy, but not all, — only those who had claims. After these, friends of importance took their turn; and after all the rest, we ourselves, pretending to be judges and to go into transports of admiration. This procession lasted so long, that one day we asked ourselves, and we asked Cousin, when it would be over. Upon my word, he sought out no pretext; he simply began to laugh, and confessed that he could not make up his mind to part with so rare a masterpiece. Yet it is not now among his books: as for the poor princess, she did not get it.

I could better understand Cousin's enthusiasm for bringing out fine unpublished works. M. Taine, who gives him high praise for having this passion, and for more than once arousing it in others, cites a page of his in which he adjures the possessors of Malebranche's letters to publish them. "They commit a robbery by condemning these letters to oblivion," said he. "They are our rightful due, — the patrimony of all men of letters. If the proprietor of these manuscripts dreads the expense, I will defray

it. If he needs an introduction or notes, I am ready." This passage reminds me of an anecdote that bibliophiles ought to know.

A sale of Malebranche autographs was announced. Cousin hastened to it. The manuscript is authentic; he must have it. A first bid. A bookseller carelessly makes another. Cousin would fain advance rapidly, but restrains his ardor, increasing the bid little by little, so as not to disclose the immensity of his desire. The other man — always so reserved and calm — comes steadily after him. By little and little a large sum is reached. Cousin begins to tremble. He questions the bookseller, he gazes at the audience. Finally, the real purchaser enters the room. Cousin at once detects him. "What use could you make of it?" And he lectures his man on the necessity of putting such a treasure into good hands, — a great oversight on the part of such a diplomatist! The more he insists, the more resolute is his rival. It is impossible to compete with that long purse. Cousin is obliged to yield. The bookseller receives the precious pages and hands them over to his happy client. Straightway Cousin changes his tactics. "Are you going to publish this?" "By no means!" Then follows the whole passage cited with many developments by M. Taine: "Permit

me to ride in your carriage." "A great honor for me." Cousin follows the buyer to his library and plies him with compliments. "Here, I suppose, is your previous conquest!" "I have something better than that." "Where is it?" "There; admire it!" "This did not come from the auction sale. How did you get it?" "That is my secret!" "Apropos of the Malebranche [returning to the subject while the other firmly awaited the attack], these letters were written previously to 'The Search after Truth.' There is in them a passage that may be regarded as the first glimmer of an opinion —" "What opinion?" "That is my secret. Are you willing to publish it? I will make you a preface." "And the trouble I have taken to-day will be all for you?" "No; I will make you a present of my prose. You shall publish it under your own name." "Only that everybody may recognize it as yours!" Cousin had no hope. He knew his man too well, and was aware that he could not get the better of such obstinacy. He was fighting for honor, lest it should be said that he had not stoutly held out against the enemy. "Lend it to me," said he, heaving great sighs. "Do me the kindness to come and consult it here; my study shall be at your service." Then followed fresh negotiations, in which, at

last, Cousin half retrieved the day. The manuscript — which was voluminous — was lent to him, upon his solemn promise to return it the next day before ten o'clock in the morning. Night had fallen; Cousin could read it only by lamplight. He departed with the precious treasure. Four Normal School pupils, straightway placed in requisition, passed the night in copying it. To give them stomach for the task, Madame Blanchard made for them some of her famous cabbage soup. At the stroke of ten, Cousin placed the manuscript in the hands of its owner who was much relieved, and complimented him on his punctuality. Cousin feigned indifference, spoke of other matters, and said, as he was going out, "When do you publish?" "Why, I told you," replied the other. "My resolution is unchanged." "That being the case," rejoined Cousin, "I shall offer you a large-paper copy in one month from now." His interlocutor could only bite his lip, in the consciousness that he had been outwitted. There was nothing for it except to show himself a generous friend of letters. This he did, and did it well.

Cousin had been ushered by Pascal into the study of French society in the seventeenth century. The relations of Descartes were rather to foreign countries than to France.

With Pascal it was different. This devotee and fanatic was a man of the world. Through him Cousin became acquainted with Mademoiselle de Roannez, and above all with Jacqueline. It might be said that in accordance with his mania for making elaborate researches, he studied Pascal in her. This first book on the women of the seventeenth century may in a manner pass for a philosophic work, because of the heroine's name and profession. But it was already evident that Cousin was smitten; that he would not abide in cloisters; that, philosopher though he was, or had been, he would frequent the boudoirs. As the reader knows, great lords were not the only ones admitted there, — pedants were also received for the love of Greek.[1] But this pedant did not talk like Ménage (or rather Vadius); he was of kin to the greatest wits.

To Madame de Longueville, Madame de Sablé, Madame de Chevreuse, Madame de Hautefort, one after the other, he gave new life; yes, new life, in spite of all that may be said, and notwithstanding his display of erudition. If he leaves biography to give a picture of French

[1] The pedant Vadius, supposed to be a caricature of Madame de Sévigné's celebrated tutor, Ménage, is admitted by Molière into the company of the "Learned Ladies" "for the love of Greek." ("Femmes Savantes," iii. 5.) — Tr.

society in the seventeenth century, he takes pains to inform you that this is the society of the *précieuses*, and that he will base his work upon "Cyrus the Great." The nine volumes thus published by Cousin form an agreeable but singular sequel to his eight volumes on the "History of Philosophy," his five volumes of "Philosophic Fragments," his editions of the Proclus manuscripts and of Abelard's "Sic et Non."

From this time on, Cousin confines himself definitively to the seventeenth century, of which he was passionately fond, and to the first part of the century, the heroic and turbulent part, which he evidently prefers to the more faultless and more orderly society dominant in Europe under Louis XIV. He might have devoted himself to the heroes, or to the preachers, — since he is of their trade, — or to the great writers; but no, he is attracted by the women, and no longer by devout and austere women like Jacqueline, but by the great *inamoratas* and the fair penitents. He frequents the salon and the boudoir rather than the cloister. Does he compose a book on Mazarin, it is to study that statesman's youth, when Mazarin tested on the women of the court the political genius by which he was to succeed as well as Richelieu, without having to

strike as many hard blows. A few years before, when Cousin was translating Plato, commenting on Xenophanes, editing Proclus, who would have said that with advancing years he would bury himself in "Cyrus the Great," — to rise no more; that he would be conversant with the sayings and opinions of Mademoiselle de Scudéry; that he would be interested not only in great passions and great adventures, but in the tastes and fancies of gay ladies; that his curiosity would ransack the folds of their hearts; that it would be a literary commonplace to represent him as the posthumous lover of Madame de Longueville? He is the only man, apparently, of whom it may be said that he loved a mistress who had been dead these two hundred years. He simply paid his addresses to a captivating woman who, as became the sister of the great Condé, had some traces of her brother's undisciplined temper. M. Taine, who wrote about M. Cousin a most brilliant, most witty, most profound, and most malevolent book, says very humorously that Cousin fancied himself the brother-in-law of Condé and the rival of La Rochefoucauld. The fact is, that this history of Madame de Longueville, in spite of a bibliographical display perhaps slightly out of place but certainly very amusing to those acquainted with M. Cousin,

is full of life and passion. These jests touching Cousin's retrospective flame, which amused the salons of Paris forty years ago, and which are repeated now by M. Taine and me, — by him almost as a criticism, and by me almost as a commendation, — would truly be very barren if these portraits by M. Cousin had as little life and reality as M. Taine pretends. He contrasts this gallery with the portraits by Michelet and Sainte-Beuve, and says in so many words that Cousin exhibits nought but erudition and declamation, while the two others have the true historical genius, which is creative.

This judgment is, in my opinion, more than severe. Sainte-Beuve, writing as a very witty and highly-cultivated man converses in a drawing-room, analyzes and describes his subject with precision and refinement, takes especial care to be true and complete, and returns, if need be, to a detail until the likeness is perfect. This delicate and charming artist introduces you, without mannerism or apparatus, to intimacy with his personages, discloses their secrets, enables you to lay your finger on their qualities and on their defects. As to his quiet style, you do not think of it. Of Michelet's noisy phrase, on the other hand, you cannot help thinking, for it is unique, unexpected. One feels that Michelet despises correctness,

yet he is never incorrect. His phrase is often unfinished; perceiving that the thought is understood, he hastens on. He abounds in those magnificent words that light up a scene or a character; and he scatters them broadcast, for they come to him unsought. No one can pass with more ease from the sublime to the familiar. There is no strain, no system; you are borne onward by the forceful current of his mind. A whimsical humorist as well as a great painter, he always puts Michelet in a corner of the canvas. Should he chance not to mention himself, look closely and you will find a character that stands for him. The whole is charming, captivating, confusing; everything, especially the movement, is exaggerated. Michelet knows no calm, disdains repose; his course is stormy, but it leads to an enchanted land. Once the wizard has taken us by the hand, we would not stop if we could. For these magical pictures, according to M. Taine, Cousin substitutes a formal description. Spectacles on nose, yardstick in hand, he takes no step without adducing reasons and citing authorities. Had the lady a particle of beauty, he tells which of her portraits indicate it and which omit it. Describing her bedroom, he would give the upholsterer's name if he could. For the pettiest detail he has texts which he quotes from

the best edition, taking care to give the date and the name of publisher and bookseller. "He is all the while thrusting himself into the story with a parcel of books in his arms." He drags through his narratives "a cartload of documents." Even in the story of Madame de Longueville, where his heart is engaged, he cannot help airing his pedantry. "Just as that sweet face begins to take shape before your eyes, you hear a crash of tumbling folios."

Well, I admit the pedantry, the citations, and the folios, and I understand the complaint against them. Still, I may have my own reasons — as M. Taine has not — for being fond of pedants. Quotations, references to texts, especially when too frequent, are annoying, I grant. Yet they give confidence; and this is one step toward producing a lifelike impression. Michelet never quotes; there is not a note in his histories. If, by the merest chance in the world, he writes at the foot of the page an author's name, have no fear of his adding chapter and title. We must literally take him at his word; and as he is always in paroxysms of admiration or of rage, this is a perilous course. The "folios" in M. Taine's sentence are all a joke. Cousin was, indeed, one of the last friends of folio volumes. None are made now,

except by the Academy of Inscriptions; two or three centuries ago they were much in favor. M. Cousin and I have together rummaged many a folio at Méquignon's and at Madame Porquet's. It was not very handy, but one could not help feeling that it was magnificent. I really think that M. Cousin would have preferred to read "Cyrus the Great" in a folio. But he does not make such excessive use of books as M. Taine is pleased to say. He has a right to speak of them and to cite them, for he knows them and understands them. For my part, I rather like to have people preserve the appearance and habits — I may almost say the garb — of their trade, especially if this trade be a pleasing and honorable one. I shall always remember an expression that M. Saint-Marc Girardin made use of, after passing an hour with M. Nisard, M. Patin, M. Cuvillier-Fleury, and another whom I need not name: "We were a company of three or four pedants who gave one another much delight." Pedant or not, M. Cousin must be acknowledged to have made his literary works attractive, since they charmed every one in Paris and in Europe who is interested in the history of literature and of noble sentiments. I do not think that having success is sufficient proof of deserving it, and I know that there is a spurious kind of

success; but taking into consideration the subjects of his books, the author and his audience, I affirm that here are only just ideas, noble sentiments, ascertained facts, and a style that would have been enjoyed at Mademoiselle de Scudéry's. After all, M. Taine's only objection to M. Cousin is that he wrote in the nineteenth century. As a nineteenth-century writer he is very incomplete, and of contestable merit; had he had the good fortune to be born during Mazarin's youth, he would justly have been reckoned among the greatest wits. This conclusion gives me courage to meet the somewhat harsh criticism before mentioned. We are in many respects ahead of our ancestors, but not in respect to literature. Instead of quarrelling with M. Cousin touching certain declamations here and there slipping into his books, — for I will not deny that he had the oratorical temperament, — I prefer to repeat with Sainte-Beuve that "this wonderful writer's inspirations, whatever direction they may take, are neither swift nor eloquent by halves."

I retain, therefore, all my former admiration for these learned and artistic volumes, giving us inventories and catalogues, it is true, but investing even these unpromising materials with a certain charm, relating facts, fathoming mo-

tives and feelings, speaking the same language as the heroines portrayed, sometimes indeed making the picture somewhat solemn and conventional, but only to render the likeness more exact. Perhaps I may feel that such a man as M. Cousin might have made better use of all this knowledge, sagacity, and eloquence. But taken for what they are, these books are exceedingly honorable to their author and to contemporary letters.

Almost all these papers first appeared in the "Journal des Savants" (this may explain their learned airs) or in the "Revue des Deux Mondes;" for M. Cousin was very fond of rehandling and completing his thought, throwing it first into the form of a sketch, then of a review article, and finally into the definitive form of a volume, to which — having completed his discovery and fully developed his thought — he would append citations, supplements, analytical tables, much after the fashion of his ancestors, the scholars and wits of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even during the metaphysical fever of the first period of his life he sometimes slipped into scholarly researches and literary labors. I have already pointed out that in 1820 and the years following, instead of composing an independent body of doctrine, he busied himself with the

publication of documents and commentaries, — Proclus and Descartes; translations of Plato and of the first and twelfth books of Aristotle's "Metaphysics;" books of travel and of pedagogy; reports on the schools of Holland and of Germany. So likewise after 1830 his works on the women of the seventeenth century did not absorb him to such an extent as to lead him to entirely abandon philosophy. He revised his lecture courses as a whole, and published some new volumes on philosophy in its new phase as the official philosophy. His life was not so completely cut in two as it would seem. One might have guessed that the translator of Plato would read "Cyrus the Great," while it is easy to see that the commentator on "Cyrus the Great" has translated Plato. The whole secret of this life is, that Cousin loved and cultivated most of all the politics of philosophy. He took up philosophy in the first place as a subject to preach on. He soon got the metaphysical fever, which drove him for fifteen years athwart the schools, and left him suddenly at the moment when Philosophy abdicated in his favor and recognized him as her master. His great services are of the political order. M. Janet employs all his great talent to rehabilitate him as a philosopher and as the founder of a school, — a task that need

never be undertaken for Kant, Schelling, or Hegel. But it requires no effort to show that Cousin exerted upon philosophy, upon education, and upon French literature the widest and most beneficent influence.

M. Taine, in concluding his brilliant and memorable study of Cousin, assures us that what he most lacked was to have been born in the seventeenth century. He would have entered the service of the Church, and have become the favorite preacher of those great ladies whom — thanks to him — we know so well. M. Taine goes to the length of taking us to hear one of Cousin's sermons, and of describing his emotions in Madame de Longueville's presence.

Over against this picture I shall modestly set another. The Parisians have conceived the idea of founding a great school of higher learning, or some other excellent institution in which a great and noble spirit cannot fail to be interested. Cousin has been asked once more to occupy his chair for an hour to explain their aim and purpose. He straightway leaves Cannes, the place to which he has been exiled by his physician, and defies fatigue that he may take part in a great enterprise: there he is. It is the same chair, the same amphitheatre, the same Sorbonne; it is also the same man. He

has the same voice, the same gesture, the same imagination, the same energy that he had fifty years ago. As he enters, he runs his eyes over the audience. The young are still there, another generation, as eager for excitement and for knowledge as those he knew. The youth are crowded back on the upper benches, because all the old men have hastened hither once again to hear the voice of him they call master. The Institute in a body has taken its place upon the benches; beside it every one in Paris who holds a chair or works in a laboratory. At the sight of him, they recall his life, his wretched childhood, his thorough and brilliant studies. They follow him, in fancy, to the Normal School, which he is the first to enter, and which he influences so profoundly, — first as a pupil, immediately afterward, at the age of twenty, as instructor in Greek, at twenty-one, as instructor in philosophy. At twenty-three he is Royer-Collard's substitute in the Literary Faculty. Where does he lecture? Close by, in the halls of the Du Plessis College, — then annexed to the College of Louis the Great. But he does not stay there long; the novelty and brilliancy of his teaching attract such throngs that he has to open this very hall of the Sorbonne, to which he returns to-day after half a century. Hither he

comes, from 1815 to 1820, to initiate young men into all the great problems of philosophy. La Romiguière had charmed him by his witty and graceful diction; Royer-Collard had made a conquest of him by the authority and force of his dialectics; but they were both absorbed in the study of the faculties of the soul, while Cousin discusses all the problems of human destiny, the origin of the universe, and the development of history. All systems are familiar to him, all sciences bring him their tribute; he describes the march of the centuries and the evolution of human thought. He rises so high, he plunges so deep, he sees so far, that the science he sets forth seems to be the synthesis of all sciences. He speaks slowly, because his speech follows the movement of his thought, and his thought seeks out the truth under the very eyes of his hearers, who share the emotions aroused by his discoveries. What powerful language, glowing, varied, easy and yet correct, clear and yet altogether new, adapting itself to the most difficult deductive reasoning in metaphysics and yet losing none of its limpidity, combining in just proportions elevation and grace, by turns stimulating and charming, — a scholar's learning, a thinker's strength, a master's eloquence!

So young and already so famous, he lives a

hermit amid his books; to him the world is nothing; he knows, loves, desires only learning. The emissaries of the restored monarchy dog his steps; but he is as insensible to fear as to ambition, so that one day the reaction, grown all-powerful, crushes him with its heavy hand. Reduced to silence, he buries himself in Germany, — a land to Frenchmen mysterious and unknown, where he is welcomed by scholars and persecuted by the government. Resuming his chair in 1828, "upon the return of our constitutional hopes," with the double halo of dismissal and persecution, he brings to his hearers a wholly new philosophy; not the philosophy of the seventeenth century, but a philosophy living and powerful, summing up the aspirations of the nineteenth century, which must forever bear its stamp.

The year 1830 invests him with the control of philosophical instruction; to this he brings all the intensity he has hitherto displayed as a teacher. He assumes the management of the Normal School, presides in the examinations for fellowships, gives professors their programme and their orders, selects them, directs them, animates them with his own zeal, nourishes them with his doctrine, makes them partners in his task; for fifteen years he thus teaches at one and the same time in all the

chairs of the realm. The University is attacked: he defends it. Philosophy is in peril: he saves it. If he turns away from philosophy for a moment, it is to assist M. Guizot in founding primary instruction. The books that he has written would alone form a whole library. All this teaching, this administrative work, these writings,—do they not fill his life amply and nobly? Amid all these labors he finds time to hold the foremost place as a talker in the Parisian salons,—for society made a conquest of him after the austerity of his youthful years, and he learned that species of literature, peculiar to France, known as social conversation, in which he had no rivals. His inexhaustible energy expended itself in writings, in lectures, in conversation, in correspondence, in action. He knew no sickness, no weakness. Even when immured in the dungeons of Prussia, a prey to anxiety about the result of his trial and the completion of his "Plato," he studied German and translated some poems of Goethe. Upon the advent of the Empire, the control of instruction escapes him. His activity takes refuge in the Academies. He enlightens them, guides them, and, to keep nothing back, intrigues in them. He has known all the great survivors of the last century and the Revolution, all the great strugglers of the Restoration,

all the statesmen of the July Monarchy, all the philosophers and all the great writers of France and of Europe. We find him here, at seventy-five, in full possession of his faculties, and without one wasted hour in his life. This man will work on the very day of his death. He can face all the illustrious men who surround him, — orators, scholars, philosophers, historians; he is the peer of any among them; and presently, when you hear him speak, you will admit that none of them can compare with him in eloquence.

It is here, my dear Taine, in the midst of this audience, and not amid the fashionable devotees of the seventeenth century, that I would fain have heard M. Cousin's last sermon. Had he spoken before the throng I have described, while every listener thus recalled to mind the splendid achievements of his life, he would have appeared what he really was, — one of the most powerful masters of this nineteenth century, to which he belongs both by his excellences and by his defects, and which he made his own by virtue of the lessons he gave and the services he rendered. His friends, who were never numerous, his pupils, who are innumerable, all who knew him intimately, may have grievances against his person or against his doctrines. For all that, he is one

of the solidest glories of his native city and of all France, — one of the men who have most strongly moulded the thought of our country and of our age.

Into his life no woman enters, — at least, no living woman; in his heart and in his talent this great blank remains.

THE END.

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